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1AC—Ruralism

Observation 1: Ruralism

While Rural Transportation Networks are a Huge Part of Overall Transit Strategies, Federal Responsibility for Rural Transportation Infrastructure Has Lapsed—The Result is Destruction of Roads and Transit

Brian Dabson, Thomas G. Johnson and Charles W. Fluharty, Research Professor at the Truman School of Public Affairs, University of Missouri, Frank Miller Professor of Agricultural and Applied Economics and the Truman School of Public Affairs at the University of Missouri and President and CEO of the Rural Policy Research Institute, "Rethinking Federal Investments in Rural Transportation: Rural Considerations Regarding Reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act," Rural Policy Institute Policy Brief, April 2011

(http://www.rupri.org/Forms/RUPRI_Transportation_April2011.pdf)

Although these decisions taken in the 1970s and 1980s were made in what was deemed to be in the national interest, they have left rural America with a greatly diminished transportation system. Other Federal decisions, such as the North America Trade Agreement, have led to major increases in heavy truck traffic and concerns about road failure and repair costs on the rural road network. According to the Federal Highway Administration (2001), there are 3.1 million miles of rural roads, accounting for 80 percent of the national road network. They carry about 40 percent of vehicle miles traveled. About 50 percent are paved and 90 percent are two-lane or less. City and county governments are responsible for 95 percent of unpaved and 55 percent of paved roads. This extensive rural road network represents a legacy from a rural America that was once more highly populated than it is today. With population declines in many rural regions, the loss of tax revenues has left county and city governments without the financial means to maintain and preserve this network. As a result, some 40 percent of county roads are not adequately maintained and there is a major backlog of work needed. Also funds to serve new economic development projects for tourism, agriculture, or manufacturing are hard to find. In areas of growth, on the urban fringes and in high amenity areas, local governments are finding it hard to respond to increases in traffic, especially on roads that are outside the Federal-aid system.

1AC—Ruralism

Rural Poverty is Exploding Now—The Highest Rates of Poverty in the Country are Centered in Rural Communities Without Access to Necessary Services

The Daily Yonder, Rural News Blog, "Poverty Highest in Rural America, Rising in Recession," December 27th, 2010 (<http://www.dailyyonder.com/poverty-highest-rural-america-rising-recession/2010/12/21/3098>)

Nearly one in six people living in rural America fell below the poverty line in 2009, according to data released by the U.S. Census Bureau.

And poverty rates in rural counties continue to be higher than in rural and urban communities.

In 2009, **the poverty rate in rural America was 17.26%**, according to the Yonder's analysis of Census Bureau data.

The rate in exurban counties was 13.3%; and in urban counties, the rate was 13.9%.

The national poverty rate in 2009 was 14.4%.

Rural, urban and exurban poverty rates were higher in 2009 than before the recession began in late 2007. The 2009 rates for urban, rural and exurban counties were all about one percentage point higher than the rates in 2006.

There were 8.3 million people living below the poverty line in rural counties in 2009, half a million more than in 2006.

Nationally 42.4 million people fell below the poverty line in 2009, 4 million more than before the recession began.

(The Census describes its poverty thresholds [here](#). For example, if a family with a mother, father, two children and a great aunt earned, altogether, less than \$26,245 it would qualify as poor.)

The map above shows the distribution of poverty in rural America 2009. (Click on the map to see a larger version.)

Blue counties have poverty rates below the national average of 14.4%. Dark blue counties have poverty rates under 10%.

Brown counties have rates above the national average — and the dark brown counties are high poverty communities, where more than 20% of the population earns less than the poverty threshold.

The pattern will look familiar to those who have seen other maps showing poverty in rural communities. **Appalachia, the Ozarks, the Black Belt in the Deep South, the Mississippi Delta, the Border and counties with Native American reservations all show up as high poverty.**

Farming communities, the non-Indian portions of the booming Dakotas and resort counties in the Mountain West all have low levels of poverty. Look below for the fifty rural counties with the highest and lowest levels of poverty.

In most parts of rural America, poverty rates rose between 2006 (before the recession began) and 2009.

1AC—Ruralism

Rural Populations are those Most in Need—Transit is Crucial to Successful Anti-Poverty Strategies

Alex Brown, Research and Policy Analyst at the International City/County Management Association, "Rural Transportation Issues Loom Large as Congress Begins to Act," ICMA, March 28th, 2012

([http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/blogs/blogpost/639/Rural Transportation Issues Loom Large as Congress Begins to Act](http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/blogs/blogpost/639/Rural_Transportation_Issues_Loom_Large_as_Congress_Begins_to_Act))

The U.S. rural population is at an [all-time low](#) of just 16 percent and this population change has had an effect on the transportation needs of rural Americans. According to the Community Transportation Association it is often the less mobile population groups who remain when a dramatic shift like this occurs. So while the natural inclination might be to divert transportation resources away from a shrinking populace, it becomes even more important to provide these individuals with a robust transportation network.

Rural roads and highways provide the link between states necessary for a thriving economy and as such, must be well maintained. However, data shows that citizens of rural America also have a demonstrable need for an increase in transit options. Rural Americans also spend a higher percentage of their income on fuel due to the sheer logistics of having more area to travel. Additionally, like much of the rest of the country rural unemployment is rising, meaning that those living in affected areas may face longer commutes once they re-enter the workforce.

1AC—Ruralism

This Ignorance of the Needs of Rural Residents is Based on an Ideology of Ruralism That Restricts Rural People To Second Class Citizenship—It Creates Negative Stereotypes of Rural Dwellers, Disables Political Authority, Encourages Poverty and Exacerbates Other Forms of Discrimination

Debra Lyn Basset, Associate Professor of Law, Michigan State University, "Ruralism," Iowa Law Review, January, 2003 (Lexis)

Our society has a "love-hate" relationship with its rural n1 communities. n2 On the one hand, rural areas often are idealized as safe, bucolic, quiet havens from the stress of city living. n3 On the other hand, those who live in rural areas often are stereotyped as uneducated and unsophisticated at best. n4 with stereotypes then degenerating to include such descriptors as backward, unattractive, lazy, stupid, and dirty. n5

[*276] Beneath these images, however, there is a grim socioeconomic and legal reality - a reality that relegates rural dwellers to a decidedly second-class status under the law, under government benefits and policies, and, indeed, under all things that truly matter. Our society's bias is decidedly urban. n6 Our [*277] society's focus, n7 its programs, n8 and its culture n9 are based on an urban, rather [*278] than rural, assumption. Our society's urban focus both overshadows and marginalizes rural dwellers. n10 Indeed, the very notion of "success" purveys an urban image. n11

[*279] Over the past thirty-eight years, we as a society have acknowledged various forms of invidious discrimination, which have expanded to include such bases as race, national origin, gender, color, religion, age, and disability. n12 "Ruralism," however, remains unacknowledged, indeed unrecognized, as a form of discrimination.

Ruralism involves discrimination on the basis of factors stemming from living in a rural area. n13 As is true of many other forms of discrimination, ruralism entails the projection of stereotyped attributes by a more powerful majority group onto a less powerful minority group. n14 About eighty percent of the population of the United States lives in metropolitan areas, n15 leaving only approximately twenty percent of the country's population in rural areas.

Our society, through its portrayals in television, literature, and film, perpetuates various stereotypes of rural dwellers, ranging from the "country bumpkin," embarrassingly ignorant of basic social conventions, to the dirty, slow-thinking, slow-speaking "mountain men" with low intelligence quotients attributed snickeringly to family inbreeding. n16

The harm to rural dwellers goes beyond stereotyping; discrimination against rural areas is seen in federal spending. The federal government [*280] spends more money on urban citizens than rural citizens - \$ 5,369 per urban citizen, contrasted with \$ 4,725 per rural citizen. n17 Rural dwellers not only receive a low degree of governmental protection, n18 but some federal policies create or increase problems in rural areas. n19 As a minority group, rural dwellers receive little attention from the legislatures and courts, despite suffering discrimination in virtually every area. n20

Farm subsidies are widely cast as the federal government's efforts at rural policy, when in fact, farm subsidies today largely benefit large agribusiness - only approximately six percent of all rural dwellers are farmers. n21

[*281] [*282] Rural dwellers also suffer from the erroneous, but popular, perception that communication technologies have eliminated any real rural isolation. n22 The notion that the Internet and other forms of technology serve to connect all Americans is nothing but a cruel myth to many rural dwellers. Literally millions of whom lack telephone service, much less Internet access. n23 In reality, the geographical isolation of, and discrimination against, rural dwellers increases the difficulty of, among other things, obtaining jobs, n24 [*283] attending educational institutions, n25 and accessing basic needs, goods, and services. n26

[*284] The burdens imposed by ruralism carry the same devastating consequences as other, more widely-recognized, forms of discrimination. Victims of sex and race discrimination, for example, encounter discrimination in college admissions, in employment opportunities, and in a lack of mentoring. n27 These same consequences attach to ruralism. Indeed, ruralism serves to exacerbate the impact of other forms of discrimination. n28

1AC—Ruralism

**Poverty is a Form of Structural Violence—The Decision To Maintain it is the Largest Impact—
An Ongoing and Accelerating War Against the Poor**

Mumia Abu-Jamal, Activist and Prisoner, A QUIET AND DEADLY VIOLENCE, 9/19/98
(<http://www.mumia.nl/TCCDMAJ/quietdv.htm>)

We live, equally immersed, and to a deeper degree, in a nation that condones and ignores wide-ranging "structural" violence, of a kind that destroys human life with a breathtaking ruthlessness. Former Massachusetts prison official and writer, Dr. James Gilligan observes;

"By 'structural violence' I mean the increased rates of death and disability suffered by those who occupy the bottom rungs of society, as contrasted by those who are above them. Those excess deaths (or at least a demonstrably large proportion of them) are a function of the class structure; and that structure is itself a product of society's collective human choices, concerning how to distribute the collective wealth of the society. These are not acts of God. I am contrasting 'structural' with 'behavioral violence' by which I mean the non-natural deaths and injuries that are caused by specific behavioral actions of individuals against individuals, such as the deaths we attribute to homicide, suicide, soldiers in warfare, capital punishment, and so on." -- (Gilligan, J., MD, Violence: Reflections On a National Epidemic (New York: Vintage, 1996), 192.)

This form of violence, not covered by any of the majoritarian, corporate, ruling-class protected media, is invisible to us and because of its invisibility, all the more insidious. How dangerous is it -- really? Gilligan notes:

"[E]very fifteen years, on the average, as many people die because of relative poverty as would be killed in a nuclear war that caused 232 million deaths; and every single year, two to three times as many people die from poverty throughout the world as were killed by the Nazi genocide of the Jews over a six-year period. This is, in effect, the equivalent of an ongoing, unending, in fact accelerating, thermonuclear war, or genocide on the weak and poor every year of every decade, throughout the world." [Gilligan, p. 196]

Worse still, in a thoroughly capitalist society, much of that violence became internalized, turned back on the Self, because, in a society based on the priority of wealth, those who own nothing are taught to loathe themselves, as if something is inherently wrong with themselves, instead of the social order that promotes this self-loathing. This intense self-hatred was often manifested in familial violence as when the husband beats the wife, the wife smacks the son, and the kids fight each other.

This vicious, circular, and invisible violence, unacknowledged by the corporate media, uncriticized in substandard educational systems, and un-understood by the very folks who suffer in its grips, feeds on the spectacular and more common forms of violence that the system makes damn sure -- that we can recognize and must react to it.

This fatal and systematic violence may be called The War on the Poor.

1AC—Plan

The United States Federal Government Should Substantially Increase its Investment in the Construction and Maintenance of Rural Infrastructure in the United states.

1AC—Solvency

Observation 2 is Solvency:

**Transportation Infrastructure is Crucial to Solving Rural Problems and Alleviating Poverty—
Federal Programs are Crucial to Integrated Programming—The Plan is the Basis for Any
Successful Rural Policy Making**

Brian Dabson, Thomas G. Johnson and Charles W. Fluharty, Research Professor at the Truman School of Public Affairs, University of Missouri, Frank Miller Professor of Agricultural and Applied Economics and the Truman School of Public Affairs at the University of Missouri and President and CEO of the Rural Policy Research Institute, "Rethinking Federal Investments in Rural Transportation: Rural Considerations Regarding Reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act," Rural Policy Institute Policy Brief, April 2011
(http://www.rupri.org/Forms/RUPRI_Transportation_April2011.pdf)

The importance of rural transportation in creating conditions that improve safety, travel, the environment, economic opportunity, and responses to demographic change has long been recognized by the federal government, and has been reinforced by the increasing recognition of principles to enhance the quality of life for all American communities.

The complexity and diversity of rural America, and the associated variety of needs and expectations for transportation, call for flexible and integrated responses at the local, regional, state, and federal levels.

The quality and quantity of the transportation systems that serve rural America have been steadily eroding for many decades. Economic and demographic shifts, deregulation, and underinvestment, have all had detrimental impacts on the economic opportunities in rural America and the quality of life of rural residents.

And, as is the case in other public sectors, rural transportation decision-making has suffered from the more limited resources and technical capacities which rural county and municipal jurisdictions have at their disposal, compared to their urban counterparts. Consequently, rural interests are less able to participate in transportation planning and priority setting.

Transportation is an essential component of rural economic development and quality of life considerations. However, in the past federal transportation priorities and investments have not always been adequately aligned with local and regional needs and priorities because of structural impediments to collaboration. This has resulted in economic development, cost of living, accessibility, safety, health, and overall quality of life outcomes that have not achieved their full potential.

1AC—Solvency**Federal Action is Crucial to Rebuilding Rural Infrastructure—Only Federal Leadership, Funding, Knowledge and Uniformity is Substantial Enough to Solve Rural Mobility**

Dale J. Marsico, Executive Director of the Community Transportation Association, “Transportation Challenges of Rural America,” March 12th, 2009 (http://www.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/Marsico_Testimony_3-12-09.pdf)

Although it is sometimes easier to separate communities by size and distance, it is important to remember that there is no way to separate the future of rural America from the rest of our nation, particularly as it relates to mobility. The inter-relationships between these areas is always vital — but they are especially important today because of the terrific pressure on our transportation and mobility system created by the current economic crisis. the ongoing problems in our energy area, the changing ways in which health care is being delivered, and an aging population that requires additional needs to remain in the places they call home. **Each of these situations — taken alone — represent a significant challenge but combined they create a crisis that requires leadership and investment that our federal government can provide. For the people living in rural America the stakes are high, and without mobility they risk losing access to education, employment, basic health services and other opportunities that smaller communities can no longer provide.**

There are tools available to Congress to address this situation and my testimony is an attempt to highlight those that are the most significant. The most important of these tools include opportunities that will soon begin to make their way through the legislative process concerning the reauthorization of our highway and transit legislation, health care initiatives, energy legislation, and our continued legislative response to the economic crisis. Since no single issue is responsible for the mobility problems we face, no single piece of legislation will solve the rural mobility crisis. That being said, the most important opportunity to address the situation lies in the reauthorization of SAFETEA LU. This legislation is the **cornerstone of our national mobility strategy and is both the most important piece of policy making that affects existing mobility for rural Americans, as well as the premier opportunity to create new ways of developing services that are needed.**

1AC—Solvency

Poverty is a Crucial Cite for Cultural Interrogation—Our Epistemological Inquiry Into the Source and Function of Poverty is Fertile Ground for Criticism

[Gavin Jones](#), American literature and American studies at Stanford University, "Poverty and the Limits of Literary Criticism," American Literary History, 2003 (Project Muse)

Rather than reducing questions of racial and gender consciousness to the economic determinism of class, Wharton and Wright both develop theories of poverty as an underlying social condition from which crucial elements of cultural identity and minority consciousness are generated, a condition in which the class aspects of material deprivation and the cultural aspects of gender and race, and of sexism and racism, naturally merge. Rather than lying beyond the limits of literary criticism, poverty has been implicitly theorized in this way as an integral if shifting category of social being, one that has cultural relevance as well as an epistemological dynamic that self-consciously draws attention to literary representation, thus making it the fertile site of critical practice. Indeed, a concern with poverty has often generated the kind of linguistic crises that so attract literary criticism, as we saw in [End Page 779] Melville's *Pierre*, and as becomes clear again in James Agee's classic response to the Great Depression, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941). The radical deconstruction of discursive techniques that dominates Agee's book can be read not as the precursor of postmodernism but as the apotheosis of an epistemological and ideological decentering never far from self-conscious literary responses to the contentious position of poverty within US political and social discourse—responses that avoid easy recourse to sentimental or melodramatic neutralization of the poor. Echoing Melville, Agee balances an attack upon "the laughter and tears inherent in poverty viewed at a distance" (14) with an effort to understand how behaviors, emotional habits, and ethical viewpoints emerge from the material dynamics of deprivation and oppression. ⁵⁵ This analysis of the cultural effects of socioeconomic disadvantage, however, merges into a speculation on causes, described by Agee as not merely environmental but "psychological, semantic, traditional, perhaps glandular" (208). ⁵⁶ The profound damage to the consciousnesses of the tenants, which reduces them to such "hopeless and helpless cripples" (306), has environmental sources, though Agee is more troubled by the apparent power of this damage to become self-perpetuating, not just as impoverishing cultural traditions but as genetic inheritance: "[S]aturated in harm and habit, unteachable beliefs, the germens they carry at their groins strained, cracked, split, tainted, vitiate to begin with, a wallet of cheated coinage" (102). ⁵⁷ Most troubling of all is Agee's belief that "the plainest cruelties and needs of human existence" that bring this damage have also shaped a "beauty" in the tenants' world (134), a beauty entirely indiscernible to the intellectually, irredeemably crippled individuals who have created it (203).

Inherency—Rural Transit Low Now**Rural Transit is Downsizing Now, Limits Options For those Most in Need**

Oregon Public Broadcasting, "Rural Transit Finds Creative Routes Down Bumpy Economic Road," May 11th, 2012 (http://news.opb.org/article/rural_transit_finds_creative_routes_down_bumpy_economic_road/)

Transit agencies across the Northwest are struggling to maintain service. They're adjusting to high gas prices. But so are drivers. And that means demand for public transportation is up. This is an especially tricky equation for rural bus services. They have to drive farther for fewer people. Many small town transit agencies are relatively young. Many of them are still trying to find their way on a bumpy economic road.

Beth Perry sits cross-legged on a patch of grass in downtown Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. She looks hopefully down the street for the bus that will take her home, 10 miles away. It's running late -- again. By about half an hour. But at least it's sunny out.

"There's been some times when it was like 5 degrees outside just standing out there forever," she says.

The cold, the delays -- so why bother? Because the alternative for Perry is nothing. Perry started riding the bus to work a couple of years ago after her old '89 Ford finally broke down.

"If you live in Spokane or Seattle or Portland, public transportation is just common," Perry says. "But if you live in a smaller city like this it's -- there's not a lot of ways to get around."

And just as she says this ...

"Woop, there it is. Gotta go."

... Perry jumps up to catch her bus.

Citylink, the system that serves Coeur d'Alene, is reducing its routes even though more people than ever rode these buses last year. In fact, bus ridership nationwide is growing fastest in rural areas, according to a recent survey by the American Public Transportation Association. The economy has bounced back enough in some places that more people are trying to get to jobs -- but in rural areas, it takes more of your gas money to drive there.

David Kack is a researcher with the Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University. He says if you imagine rural transit as a mini version of urban transit -- you'd be wrong.

"They're really not comparable because the motivation of why most people are riding in an urban area versus a rural area are very different."

In cities you have congestion and rush hour traffic. And Kack says, if you do take your car, there are the little matters of where to put it -- and how much that's going to cost you.

On the other hand, for many rural bus riders like Beth Perry, Kack says, they just don't have a choice.

"So, that public transportation service is a real lifeline for them."

Kack says rural transit is still in its infancy in the West and many public transit agencies are still trying to figure out where to put their few buses, so the most people will ride them.

"So I think you'll see that rural systems will continue to adapt and evolve. And find out the best way to provide the services for those people that need the rides."

Inherency—Rural Transit Low Now**Status Quo Rural Transportation Infrastructure Declining Across the Board Now**

Bureau of Transportation Statistics, "The U.S. Rural Population and Scheduled Intercity Transportation in 2010: A Five-Year Decline in Transportation Access," 2010

(http://www.bts.gov/publications/scheduled_intercity_transportation_and_the_us_rural_population/2010/html/entire.html)

Significant changes in intercity transportation access in rural America occurred between 2005 and 2010. These changes present challenges to the mobility of rural residents and their access to intercity transportation. More significant challenges may be present when considering the service levels and connections that travelers can make to other modes at each of the transportation facilities analyzed in this report. For example, in rural areas served by only one intercity mode, such as intercity bus, more transportation options are available if that one mode provides transport to terminals served by other modes, such as airports and intercity rail stations, in nearby communities. This type of connectivity between modes, facilitates wider mobility for rural travelers who do not have direct access to the other modes in their own community. The number and types of intermodal connections at individual transportation facilities are included in the BTS Intermodal Passenger Connectivity Database¹³ and can be used in future analysis on rural intercity transportation.

Advantage—Poverty Impacts (Nuclear War)**Poverty Will be the Basis for Nuclear Violence and Worldwide Conflict**

Joseph George Caldwell, PhD, The End of the World, and the New World Order, update of an article published 10/26/00, March 6, 2003, www.foundation.bw/TheEndOfTheWorld.htm.

It would appear that global nuclear war will happen very soon, for two main reasons, alluded to above. First, human poverty and misery are increasing at an incredible rate. There are now three billion more desperately poor people on the planet than there were just forty years ago. Despite decades of industrial development, the number of wretchedly poor people continues to soar. The pressure for war mounts as the population explodes. Second, war is motivated by resource scarcity -- the desire of one group to acquire the land, water, energy, or other resources possessed by another. With each passing year, crowding and misery increase, raising the motivation for war to higher levels.

Advantage—Poverty Impacts (War)**Poverty Kills Substantially More than War—Even Nuclear Conflict Doesn't Compare**

James Gilligan, Department of Psychiatry Harvard Medical School, *Violence: Reflections on Our Deadliest Epidemic*, 2000, p 195-196.

The 14 to 18 million deaths a year cause by structural violence compare with about 100,000 deaths per year from armed conflict. Comparing this frequency of deaths from structural violence to the frequency of those caused by major military and political violence, such as World War II (an estimated 49 million military and civilian deaths, including those caused by genocide--or about eight million per year, 1935-1945), the Indonesian massacre of 1965-1966 (perhaps 575,000 deaths), the Vietnam war (possibly two million, 1954-1973), and even a hypothetical nuclear exchange between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R (232 million), it was clear that even war cannot begin to compare with structural violence, which continues year after year. In other word, every fifteen years, on the average, as many people die because of relative poverty as would be killed in a nuclear war that caused 232 million deaths; and every single year, two to three times as many people die from poverty throughout the world as were killed by the Nazi genocide of the Jews over a six-year period. This is, in effect, the equivalent of an ongoing, unending, in fact accelerating, thermonuclear war, or genocide, perpetrated on the weak and poor every year of every decade, throughout the world.

Advantage—Poverty Impacts (Terrorism)**Continued Class Inequality and Inattention to the Problem of Poverty Will Exacerbate Rural Urban Divides and Result in Violence and Backlash**

Bernard Lown, MD Co-Founder, IPPNW, 1996, <http://www.ippnw.org/>, Crude Nuclear Weapons Proliferation and the Terrorist Threat

Nuclear apartheid cannot endure. The stimulus to proliferation derives largely from an inequitable world order and the growing economic divide between rich and poor countries. One fifth of the world lives on the edge of subsistence. At a time of potential abundance, more people are hungry than ever before. We end the century with far more desperately poor, illiterate, homeless, starving, and sick than we began. Nowhere are the inequities more in evidence than in the health sector. Eight hundred million people are without any health care at all. One-third of the world's population lives in countries whose health care expenditures are far less than \$12 per person per year (the bare minimum recommended by the World Bank) while the industrialized North spends more than \$1,000 for health per person annually. Recent UN figures indicate that from 1960 to 1990, per capita income rose eight-fold in the North while increasing only half as much in the deprived lands of the South. This divide is likely to widen further while accelerating over-consumption in the North and burgeoning population pressures in the developing countries. As vital raw materials, scarce minerals, fossil fuels, and especially water become depleted, Northern affluence will be sustained by imposed belt tightening of impoverished multitudes struggling for mere subsistence. This is an agenda for endless conflict and colossal violence. The global pressure cooker will further superheat by the ongoing worldwide information revolution that exposes everyone to the promissory note of unlimited consumption, there by instilling impatience and igniting more embers of social upheaval. If desperation grows, the deprived will be tempted to challenge the affluent in the only conceivable way that can make an impact, namely by going nuclear. Their possession enables the weak to inflict unacceptable damage on the strong. Desperation and hopelessness breed religious fundamentalism and provide endless recruits ready to wreak vengeance, if necessary by self immolation in the process of inflicting unspeakable violence on others. A nuclear bomb affords "the cheapest and biggest bang for the buck." No blackmail is as compelling as holding an entire city hostage. No other destructive device can cause greater societal disruption or exact a larger human toll. Terrorists will soon raise their sights to vaporizing a metropolitan area rather than merely pulverizing a building.

Advantage—Rural Transit Dangerous Now**Rural Transit is Extremely Dangerous in the Status Quo—Accounts for Majority of Fatalities**

Brian Dabson, Thomas G. Johnson and Charles W. Fluharty, Research Professor at the Truman School of Public Affairs, University of Missouri, Frank Miller Professor of Agricultural and Applied Economics and the Truman School of Public Affairs at the University of Missouri and President and CEO of the Rural Policy Research Institute, "Rethinking Federal Investments in Rural Transportation: Rural Considerations Regarding Reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act," Rural Policy Institute Policy Brief, April 2011

(http://www.rupri.org/Forms/RUPRI_Transportation_April2011.pdf)

There are many consequences of this continuing underinvestment, the most obvious being that of safety. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration⁴, rural areas accounted for 56 percent of fatal road crashes and 57 percent of fatalities nationwide. These are attributed to excessive speed, alcohol use, and accident response times and/or time to receive medical treatment.

Advantage—Rural Transit Key to Health Care**Transportation is Critical to Rural Health Care and Taking Care of Elderly Populations**

Dale J. Marsico, Executive Director of the Community Transportation Association, "Transportation Challenges of Rural America," March 12th, 2009 (http://www.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/Marsico_Testimony_3-12-09.pdf)

No more is this increased regionalism readily seen than in the area of health care services and delivery. National health care trends clearly point to outpatient medicine as the important way we address the future health care needs of our citizens, especially the elderly.

We need no additional studies to remind us that procedures that were once common inpatient services requiring lengthy hospital stays are now done on a daily outpatient basis. Other services like outpatient dialysis, physical therapy, outpatient chemotherapy, are also reminders of the increased potential of reducing costs as part of our health care strategy. However, all the outpatient services are useless without access and rural transportation has become the connection for millions to these services — especially to our senior citizens and those in our health care programs assisted by Medicaid. We must continue to make mobility for those who need it a vital part of our outpatient health care efforts. To do that we must maintain the requirements for outpatient non-emergency medical transportation for those enrolled in the Medicaid program with special effort to protect those in rural America. The termination of these benefits, as threatened in the last administration, threaten the very lives of recipients but falls heaviest on those in rural communities who must travel further to receive their outpatient services. Since many of them lack their own transportation, or are too weak to manage their own transportation, the lives of these people hang in the balance. We are deeply grateful to you, Mr. Chairman, for your advocacy in this area particularly in your efforts to prevent the dis-establishment of this important effort in the Medicaid program. Rural America needs the benefits provided by your legislation —HR 7122 as introduced last year — and we need it today while the regulations affecting this service are being reconsidered.

Advantage—Rural Transit Key to Economy**Rural Transportation Infrastructure is Crucial to Agriculture and Overall Competitiveness**

Andrew Walmsley, American Farm Bureau Federation's transportation specialist, "Transportation Critical to Rural America," Rural Community Building, February 2nd, 2012 (<http://ruralcommunitybuilding.fb.org/2012/02/02/rural-transportation/>)

American agriculture depends on four major modes of transportation: trucking, railroads, barges, and ships. And a joint [study](#) by USDA and DOT in 2010 looked at the issues affecting rural transportation policy. Without surprise, one of the findings from the study found the need for agricultural transportation will continue to increase based on projected growth for U.S. grown agricultural products not only in the U.S. but around the world.

One tidbit that was interesting from the report was that manufacturing employs 15 percent of the rural workforce. And as share of total employment, manufacturing is 42 percent more important to rural American than to urban America. Just like agriculture, many of the same transportation needs are required for a vibrant manufacturing economy.

Some of the major issues identified by the study included:

Infrastructure

Increases in compliance costs

Availability of equipment

Exemptions for agriculture

Carrier antitrust exemptions

Railroad practices that reduce competition

The modal focus of transportation policy and funding

If America is to stay competitive globally, create jobs domestically, continue to feed a growing world population, encourage manufacturing at home, and strengthen rural communities, we cannot lose focus on the importance of transportation and infrastructure.

The stereotype of the rural economy focuses on agriculture but, in reality, the picture is more complex. As shown in Figure 3-4, agriculture is far from the largest employer in rural America. Four other economic sectors—services, government, retail and wholesale trade, and manufacturing—comprise 80 percent of rural employment. Agriculture is responsible for less than one in ten rural jobs. However, because agriculture is so capital intensive, the economic activity generated by it is greater than the job opportunities it creates. The interaction of agriculture and the off-farm jobs it supports provides a solid base for many rural communities. A solid transportation system is a critical foundation for success in all the economic sectors of rural America." (page 117)

Advantage—Rural Infrastructure Key to the Economy**Investment in Rural Infrastructure is Crucial to Overall Competitiveness**

Transportation for America, "Transportation, Small Towns, + Rural Communities," 2008

(http://t4america.org/policybriefs/t4_policybrief_rural.pdf)

The current transportation system hurts rural and small town economies by limiting the ability of the manufacturing sector to adapt to changes in the marketplace. Recent growth in the amount of freight transported through rural areas has resulted in the nation's highways, railroads, and waterways operating at or near capacity. Without investment in multi-modal transportation systems - including intercity rail - it will be increasingly difficult for rural economies to respond to global changes, hurting regional and national competitiveness.

Rural transportation connects people to jobs, health care, and family and contributes to regional economic growth by connecting businesses to customers, goods to markets, and tourists to destinations. Research has shown that rural and small metropolitan transit services offer measurable economic benefits. In one study, rural counties with transit service were found to have 11 percent greater average net earnings growth over counties without transit, and the estimated annual impact of rural public transportation on the national economy was over \$1.2 billion⁹.

Advantage—Ruralism→ Heteronormativity
The Assumption of “Metro-Normativity” Encourages Exclusion of Rural Queers and Creates Structural Discrimination

Bud Jerke, J.D., University of Pennsylvania Law School, 2010, “Queer Ruralism,” Harvard Journal of Law and Gender, 2011 (<http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/jlg/vol341/259-312.pdf>)

The U.S. legal system and queer Americans have something important in common: an urban assumption. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender citizens—collectively referred to here as “queer”¹—are deemed to be exclusively metropolitan dwellers. Queer orientations are urban orientations. The U.S. legal system is equally bound up in urbanity, assuming that social problems are exclusively those that are urban and constructing legal responses tailored to urban ills.

Urban assumptions are part and parcel of deeply held stereotypes about the rural generally and rural queers particularly. Rural dwellers are popularly depicted as backwards—as uneducated, intolerant, and dirty—or idyllic—as innocent and safe. Such stereotypes work to marginalize and distort rural realities. They lend to ruralism, which has been defined as “discrimination on the basis of factors stemming from living in a rural area.”² To compound this, rural queers are rendered invisible because popular stereotypes perceive queer people as solely urban. This “queer metronormativity” is pervasive in popular culture,³ scholarly literature, and even judicial rhetoric.⁴

Rural queers reside at the intersection of ruralism and queer metronormativity. They are a particular subset of rural dwellers for whom ruralism is particularly acute. This paper examines the situation of rural queers to construct a concept of queer ruralism: structural discrimination stemming from being queer and living in a rural area.

Advantage—Ruralism is Discrimination

Ruralism is a Fundamentally Structural Form of Discrimination—The Embodiment of Ruralism Enforces Poverty, Exacerbates Other Forms of Oppression and Marginalizes Huge Segments of the Population

Bud Jerke, J.D., University of Pennsylvania Law School, 2010, "Queer Ruralism," Harvard Journal of Law and Gender, 2011 (<http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/jlg/vol341/259-312.pdf>)

A growing body of scholarship is examining America's rural-urban divide in the context of legal studies. As a general point, "society's focus, its programs, its culture, and its standards are based on an urban assumption."⁹ Likewise, our legal system is considered equally urban-centric.¹⁰ In the U.S., "[a]n unspoken assumption permeates modern scholarship: the impact of laws should be measured exclusively in terms of how the legal system operates in America's cities and suburbs."¹¹ This urban assumption of American society results in the exclusion and marginalization of those who are not "urban"—America's rural inhabitants who have "disappeared from view."¹² This marginalization manifests in "ruralism," a distinctive form of "discrimination on the basis of factors stemming from living in a rural area."¹³ Awareness and acknowledgment of ruralism as a form of discrimination suffers because ruralism "does not look like what we [think] discrimination [should] look[] like."¹⁴ Ruralism's effects are not a result of "outright hostility to a particular group,"¹⁵ as "most individuals do not overtly express discriminatory animus toward rural dwellers."¹⁶ As such, ruralism is often characterized as merely a set of disadvantages. Ruralism is best cast as a form of structural discrimination. Current literature has not considered this approach, but it is an appropriate framework for describing how American society's various policies, assumptions, and stereotypes have pervasive and systemic—and hence, discriminatory—adverse effects on rural dwellers. Structural discrimination is more fully explored in Part V, as applied to queer ruralism. For now, it suffices to define structural discrimination as: "the policies of dominant race/ethnic/ gender institutions and the behavior of the individuals who implement these policies and control these institutions, which are race/ethnic/gender neutral in intent but which have a differential and/or harmful effect on minority race/ethnic/gender groups."¹⁷ The structural discrimination that constitutes ruralism arises from the confluence of an urban-centric focus of policymakers who draft laws tailored to urban ills while eliding rural differences,¹⁸ judicial rhetoric that embraces and constitutes rural stereotypes,¹⁹ and society's popularly embraced perceptions of rurality as embodied in television, literature, and film.²⁰ The effects of ruralism are numerous. Ruralism works to exacerbate rural poverty.²¹ The predominant focus on urban poverty renders rural poverty virtually invisible and lacking the attention that it requires. This may be attributed to stereotypes, as discussed above, that portray rural as ideal and positive or because of spatial isolation and metrocentricism.²² Ruralism contributes to an educational and employment divide. Economic factors, such as funding disparities, and geographic and cultural isolation, which make it but equal' problem: educational facilities are provided to rural children, but the opportunities do not approximate those provided to urban children."²³ Educational disadvantages, coupled with ruralist perceptions that "[b]rilliance is associated with urban, not rural, dwellers" puts these rural inhabitants at a significant disadvantage for post-college employment.²⁴ Ruralism manifests in the lack of access to various goods and services.²⁵ These include access to quality and affordable healthcare,²⁶ housing,²⁷ and other government and social services, such as welfare,²⁸ mental health treatment,²⁹ and substance abuse programs.³⁰ Disconcertingly, "ruralism serves to exacerbate the impact of other forms of discrimination."³¹ This paper explores how ruralism uniquely complicates life for queer rural dwellers. In one sense, it is an extension of earlier work that has examined the particularly acute challenges rural racial minorities face by residing at the intersection of racism and ruralism.³²

Advantage—Negative Stereotypes→ Ruralism

Negative Stereotyping of Rural Communities Contributes to Overall Forces of Ruralist Oppression

Bud Jerke, J.D., University of Pennsylvania Law School, 2010, "Queer Ruralism," Harvard Journal of Law and Gender, 2011 (<http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/jlg/vol341/259-312.pdf>)

What are the forces animating ruralism? Like other forms of discrimination, ruralism is driven by popularly embraced stereotypes about rural people and their lives. Dichotomous stereotypes operate to construct rurality as either idyllic or backwards. Professor Debra Lyn Bassett has attributed the seeming inconsistency of these stereotypes to societies' " 'love-hate' relationship with its rural communities."³³

Idyllic conceptions of rural life are embraced to signify that the rural lifestyle is simple and desirable. These stereotypes perceive rural America as "quiet, clean, connected, and wholesome."³⁴ They embrace a national "nostalgia for our rural past," when we were "safe" and everyone was "neighborly."³⁵ Accordingly, the rural ideal is incompatible with important social issues, such as poverty,³⁶ and tends to perpetuate the "long-standing notion that law should play less of a role in rural livelihoods."³⁷ Rural idealism—although seemingly good-natured—perpetuates ruralism by masking social, political, and legal issues behind idyllic stereotypes.

Conversely, a more facially degrading stereotype perceives rural people as "uneducated and unsophisticated . . . backward, unattractive, lazy, stupid, and dirty."³⁸ Popular culture is riddled with examples of this type of rural stereotyping, including television,³⁹ literature,⁴⁰ and film.⁴¹ It could be argued that these portrayals are mere jokes and are not meant to be taken seriously. As Professor Bassett identifies, however, "pervasive stereotyping dehumanizes" and "the impact is the same whether the stereotyping involves African-Americans, women, gays and lesbians, or rural dwellers."⁴²

Advantage—Ruralism is Epistemological

Ruralism is an Epistemic Category—The Exclusion of the “Rural” from the Civilized” Informs Cultural Imperatives Towards Exclusion

Garrett Dash Nelson, PhD Candidate at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, “Towards the New Ruralism,” 2009 (<http://people.matinic.us/garrett/ttnr/Full-WebBound.pdf>)

The metanarrative of this essay is a theory of the new ruralism which maintains that “rural” is the most important containing category of analysis for an American cultural fascination with the human-nature dyad that has long been studied piecemeal by separate subdisciplines. I mean to establish rurality as the common variable linking many concepts generating and generated by American society. Terms like “western,” “frontier,” and “wilderness” define epiphenomenal characteristics of the social patterns and ethnologic complexes in which we are interested; the terms “pastoral” or “agrarian” are slightly better, but “rural” is best of all. The new ruralism re-establishes the legitimacy of “rural” as a first-order academic category by liberating it from the confines of its own component parts. In applying this theory, I aim to disable two longstanding notions in the academic treatment of rural society: first, that rurality is in all cases a counterforce to modernization; and second, that rurality is defined solely by demographic and statistical patterns. The first assumption posits rural society as regressive and obsolete, and disengages it from academic studies of industrialization, secularization, and other modern phenomena. The second confines rural scholarship to a study of instrumentally rural populations, dooming it to further marginalization as those populations diminish in size. Both of these assumptions are built around beliefs which are unanalytical and normative; both constrain our ability to accurately understand social patterns; and, most importantly, both are untrue. In opposition to the first notion—that rural places are anti-modern—this essay illuminates how rurality has pushed American social, political, and economic development forwards, emphasizing the frequent collusion between rurality and futurism. This breaks a longstanding cryptonormativity which is encoded into the very vocabulary of the English language. “Urbane,” from the Latin *urbs*, or city, indicates a high compliment which implies sophistication, intelligence, and refinement. By contrast, “rustic,” from the Latin *rus*, or countryside, indicates an unrefined aspect which is at best quaint and at worst backwards. “Urbane” is a progressive word; “rustic” is a regressive word. The binary reaffirms the inferiority and unenlightenment of rural conditions: modern is to archaic as urbane is to rustic as *urbs* is to *rus*. Yet semantics also reveal sites of confusion, places where normative signals have been crossed. The words “civilization” and “culture,” two of the most laudatory terms for social achievements, have overlapping and sympathetic meanings. Their spatial origins, however, are opposites. Civilization stems from *civitas*, and shares a common parent with “city.” By contrast, “culture” is from *cultura*, meaning tillage or farming, and shares a common root with “cultivation.”¹¹ In line with this latter semantic field, the new ruralism makes the case that rural thinking can and often does express progressive cultural forces. In opposition to the second notion—that rurality is an exclusively morphological condition—the new ruralism deals with the category “rural” in contemporary society by giving it the form of a shared cultural imperative evident in ways of thinking about places, natural resources, meanings, politics, and morality in the social gestalt of a translocatable community. Using a metaphor of the sedimentation of cultural behavior,¹² this essay shows how rurality in the United States has developed upward from a material rurality of conditions and demographic forms, through an aspirational rurality of political, social, and literary modernization, and finally into an imaginative rurality of epistemology and semiotics.¹³ This imaginative rurality is a plastic ethnographic concept. It translates the physical form of rural landscapes and environments into a mental form of social landscapes and environments, and it makes it possible to talk about rurality and rural thinking even amongst the residents of the largest cities. It is not, however, entirely independent of its foundational meaning as a specific type of built environment; rather, imaginative rurality has exceeded and transcended its former shapes while retaining their distinctive marks. To develop this sedimentary analysis, the major structural arc of this essay is historical. It tracks how the concept of rurality has accreted and accumulated through time, dredging up old ideas and practices and converting them into new ones. Rural societies in the field, in the here-and-now, imply the existence of rural societies before (and after) them in time. To properly understand them, the social scientist must bore down through the layers of history and provide a stratigraphic analysis of the social landscape—performing, as Simon Schama puts it in *Landscape and Memory*, “an excavation below our conventional sight-level to recover the veins of myth and memory that lie beneath the surface.”¹⁴ This approach locates the ethnographic situation of the present day as a surface layer arranged above preceding layers which contour its forms. Any given point on the surface of the sedimented mass is situated atop a thick, complicated slab of historical accumulation. us this argument begins in the colonial period and concludes in the present day. Although this may induce the casual viewer to assume that this essay is principally historical in its methodology, the historical trajectory is symmetrical to and coincident with the social theoretical argument.

Advantage—Ruralism Key to Identity

Anti-Ruralist Discrimination is Fundamental to the Construction of Identity—Negative Stereotypes and Oppressive Attitudes are Fundamentally Problematic

Debra Lyn Bassett, Visiting Professor of Law, University of California, Davis, School of Law, "The Rural Venue," Alabama Law Review, Summer 2006 (Lexis)

In addition to the injustices that can result from discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation, there is another, less familiar, form of discrimination. Ruralism involves discrimination on the basis of factors stemming from living in a rural area. [n12](#) Indeed, "ruralism" is a pervasive form of discrimination -- largely unrecognized, unacknowledged, and unexamined -- and one often impacting most harshly those individuals who already are subject to other forms of discrimination based on gender, class, and race." [n13](#)

Like other forms of discrimination, ruralism employs stereotypes. These rural stereotypes -- as is true of other stereotypes -- fall within a dichotomous desirable/undesirable pattern: Rural places are desirable, and thus are idealized and romanticized; rural dwellers are undesirable, and thus are denigrated and ridiculed. [n14](#) This dichotomy might be primarily only of sociological interest, were it not for the fact that this same dichotomy is demonstrable in the legal arena as well.

General examples of rural stereotypes -- both positive and negative -- are found easily in the caselaw, including references to

"backward," [n15](#) "isolated," [n16](#) ["945] "uneducated," [n17](#) "pastoral," [n18](#) "lonely," [n19](#) "peaceful," [n20](#) "rustic," [n21](#) "bucolic," [n22](#) "quiet," [n23](#) "country folk," [n24](#) and "quality of life." [n25](#) One court ["946] has even considered a lawyer's use of a peremptory challenge to strike a juror on the basis that the prospective juror was a "redneck." [n26](#) Sometimes rural references are patronizing and insulting even when intended to be flattering -- as, for example, the judge who stated that the plaintiffs "were just about the sweetest down-home country folk people I've ever seen." [n27](#) Or the dissenting judge who would have denied issuance of a writ to obtain a change of venue, stating that venue was appropriate because the county was neither "small nor unsophisticated." [n28](#) Older cases made no attempt to flatter, instead engaging in rank rural stereotyping, such as "ignorant country folk" [n29](#) (or, if you prefer, "innocent country folk" [n30](#)), "plain country folks," [n31](#) and references to speech and dialect -- such as testimony "couched in the homely but convincing words of the country folk." [n32](#) A more recent case, however, observed that "idyllic" may translate to "condescending."

The Closing Law [requiring certain commercial establishments to remain closed to the public on Sundays] . . . prohibits the opening of barbershops in cities, but one may still get a haircut in "rural districts." Leaving aside the question of how "rural district" is defined, we are hard pressed to speculate as to how the legislature could rationally find it more restful to get one's haircut in the country than in one's home town. Even the most idyllic (if condescending) image of quaint country folk gathered at the local barbershop for recreation on a Sunday afternoon falls flat when examined in the light of present day reality. [n33](#)

The vast majority of America's population resides in urban areas. [n34](#) This clustering of large groups of people into relatively small geographical areas -- 1.5 million people, for example, crowd into the 23.7 square miles ["947] known as Manhattann35 -- provides a striking contrast to the non-urban remainder. Population density is the most obvious difference between urban and non-urban living, and this foundation contributes to a host of additional differences. High population densities bring access [n36](#) -- more housing, more services, more programs, and more amenities to serve these large numbers of people. Larger sheer numbers generate more attention to needs and demands, resulting in greater power of every dimension. [n37](#) It is little wonder that the urban perspective dominates America's thinking. [n38](#)

The rural remainder are outsiders. They are geographical outsiders, living beyond metropolitan boundaries. They are also outsiders in a less literal and more figurative sense -- they are overshadowed and marginalized. The rural minority faces an interesting dichotomy -- a dichotomy based on place versus people. [n39](#) Rural places often are romanticized as unspoiled, safe, quiet, and beautiful. Rural dwellers, however, often are stereotyped as uneducated, unsophisticated, backward, [n40](#) and sometimes mentally deficient ["948] and physically dirty. [n41](#) In other words, rural areas are quaint places to visit, but they are not places with which to be associated as a year-round permanent resident.

The ideal country is the place urbanites visit, not the place where poor people eke out a living. Urban dwellers who are free from the stigma of rusticity can wax eloquently about the countryside or embrace it as a retreat without undermining their own cultural superiority -- going to the country with a fully formed urban identity is not the same as being from the country.

The very concept of a "country" home, for example, reinforces the fact that its owner is urban(e) and has an unqualified/unmarked home in the city. [n42](#)

Racism, sexism, or classism may exacerbate ruralism, and indeed, ruralism often impacts most harshly those individuals who already are subject to other forms of discrimination based on gender, class, and race. [n43](#) However, ruralism is itself a separate and independent basis for discrimination: [n44](#)

Given the pervasiveness of the rural/urban opposition and its related significance in the construction of identity, it is remarkable that the explosion of scholarly interest in identity politics has generally failed to address the rural/urban axis. The resulting representation of social distinctions primarily in terms of race, class, and gender thus masks the extent to which these categories are inflected by place identification. For example, social theorists generally fail to acknowledge that a rural woman's experience of gender inequality may be quite different from that of an urban woman, or that racial opposition in the city can take a different form from that in the countryside. [n45](#)

Ruralism might be primarily only of sociological interest, were it not for the fact that this same basic dichotomy is demonstrable in the legal arena as well. The phenomenon is particularly striking in contrasting land use cases with change of venue cases. Specifically, in land use cases, where the focus is on place, rural settings tend to be described in positive, even idealized, terms in the underlying land use regulations and in court decisions. In ["949] change of venue cases, however, the focus shifts from place to people. Venue, although cast by statute in terms of location, is judicially reviewed through reference to the prospective jury pool which, in a rural venue, involves rural dwellers. The result is that negative, unflattering rural stereotypes routinely appear in change of venue cases. These negative stereotypes typically are invoked by counsel and usually are rejected by the court. However, in some cases these stereotypes infect the court's decision.

Advantage—Law Structurally Ruralist/Law Key to Solve

Status Quo Legal Structures Have Fundamentally Anti-Rural Bias—Legal Action is Crucial to Overcome these Dichotomies

Lisa R. Pruitt, Professor of Law, University of California, Davis, "Gender, Geography & Rural Justice," Berkeley Journal of Gender, Law & Justice, Fall 2008 (Lexis)

Law and its agents are actors in these interscalar events, in shifts of the socio-spatial landscape of particular places. Law is implicated at scales associated with the market and politics, for example, by regulating employee protections, labor law, and free-trade agreements. Laws and legal regulations also influence individual actors, constituting space and place at the scales of the body and the household. This can be seen in divorce and child custody disputes, or when domestic violence erupts. In the face of such events, the law dictates who has what rights, who gets what (in terms of property and children, for example), and who bears what consequences or costs.

As I have documented elsewhere, law's application may vary between rural and urban settings. [n312](#) In divorce proceedings, for example, courts in rural states may divide property in a way that keeps a family farm intact. [n313](#) In child custody matters, some judges may favor the parent who lives in the rural place because it is seen as providing a safer, more child-friendly environment, [n314](#) while [\[*386\]](#) others will prefer urban locales, which they view as providing greater opportunity. [n315](#) As for domestic violence, although both its incidence and its ferocity tend to be greater in rural places, law enforcement and prosecutorial efforts are weaker and less consistent there. [n316](#) Courts may also overlook - or expressly deny - the enhanced physical vulnerability associated with rural spatiality. [n317](#)

Other double standards that align with the urban/rural axis may operate with regard to laws regulating employer-employee relations. [n318](#) Many rural employees are ineligible for federal protections because they are not formally employed or because their employers have too few employees to be subject to federal regulation. [n319](#) Employers with fewer than fifty employees, for example, are not subject to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), [n320](#) and those with fewer than fifteen are not subject to Title VII mandates. [n321](#) While these laws do not expressly distinguish between urban and rural employers, their application (or lack thereof) may disparately impact rural residents - especially rural [\[*387\]](#) women - who often work informally or are employed by small businesses. [n322](#)

Reflecting the multi-scalar nature of law, as well as phenomena such as rural restructuring which implicate it, state employment laws may lower some of these employee-count thresholds to protect the rights of more workers. [n323](#) The complex nature of employment protections illustrate the inter-scalar character of the legal issues arising from them, including their manifestation in rural locales. In the employment setting, then, regulation originates at several scales: the federal (e.g., FMLA or Title VII), the state (laws mirroring federal protections but sometimes altering criteria), [n324](#) and even the local, as with municipal ordinances that prohibit the hiring of unauthorized immigrants. [n325](#)

Another example where legal actors at multiple scales are implicated is domestic violence. [n326](#) It is the criminal law of states that prohibits intimate abuse, but the state is not the only scale (law) relevant to this phenomenon. Lower scales, such as county, city, or town, greatly influence how victims, perpetrators, and legal actors respond to the crime. [n327](#) These local considerations include staffing levels of law enforcement personnel, their education regarding family violence, [n328](#) and their familiarity with the parties. [n329](#)

Federal decisions will also be relevant to factors that might appear quite local, such as the availability of social services [n330](#) and physical infrastructure, such as a women's shelter [n331](#) or a sufficiently large jail. [n332](#) In spite of a 2000 [\[*388\]](#) Supreme Court decision declaring domestic violence to be "truly local," [n333](#) and striking as unconstitutional a civil rights remedy under the Violence Against Women Act ("VAWA"), funding under that Act continues to support programs aimed at reducing the incidence of domestic violence and improving its investigation and prosecution. [n334](#) The Office of Violence Against Women recognizes rural women as an at-risk population, and one category of VAWA grants is for programs in rural areas. [n335](#) Federal funds may also be used, for example, for renovating or replacing a substandard jail. These are just a few examples of the multi-scalar nature of issues arising for rural women at the junctures where they encounter law - or at least where they might if legal actors were more present, or if the law were available to them in a more meaningful way. These examples also illustrate how geography influences legal outcomes. Spatiality thus constitutes law, whether by assuming and declaring rural difference - or by overlooking it. Law also constitutes spatiality by influencing behavior - sometimes even dictating it - within spatial containers, whether great or small, public or private, urban or rural. In rural locales, however, law's influence may be greatest in its perceived irrelevance, inaccessibility, or even in its complete absence.

Advantage—Ruralism→ Patriarchy

Rurality Intersects With Gender Oppression—The Attempt to Relegate Rural Spaces to the Private Analogizes the Relegation of Women to the Home

Lisa R. Pruitt, Professor of Law, University of California, Davis, "Gender, Geography & Rural Justice," Berkeley Journal of Gender, Law & Justice, Fall 2008 (Lexis)

More than a decade ago, rural sociologist Ann Tickamyer initiated (or attempted to initiate) a conversation with legal scholars about rural women, law, and spatiality. [n336](#) Her 1996 article seems to be the earliest attempt in legal [*389] scholarship to bring critical geography to bear on women's lives, with particular attention to poor, rural women. Yet legal scholarship continues to ignore the rural milieu, including gender issues in that context. In spite of this oversight, and to some extent because of it, the opportunity presented by critical geography remains great. Thinking about rurality in terms of "space" reminds us, for example, of literal distance - both between the rural and the urban, and among those who reside in rural communities. As a consequence of this first aspect of rural spatiality, rural people and places are largely unseen by broader society. [n337](#) Further, rural spaces are considered more private relative to urban and suburban spaces, [n338](#) while women's roles and identities within rural communities are more associated, literally and figuratively, with the private. [n339](#) Functioning in spaces that are private in the extreme burdens and constrains rural women in myriad ways, as does the immobility associated with those spaces. [n340](#) Other aspects of rural spatiality also invite our attention, particularly as they relate to gender. Socioeconomic disadvantage - all too often rising to the level of poverty - is part and parcel of the socio-spatial landscape of rural America. [n341](#) Sparseness of population, a material aspect of spatiality itself, contributes to socioeconomic disadvantage because it results in - and is a result of - fewer jobs, fewer services, and a less diversified economy. Women are particularly vulnerable in this context because of the acute wage gap between rural men and women, as well as the entrenched form of rural patriarchy that keeps women's domestic duties primary. Lack of anonymity, a consequence of rural spatiality, is another significant feature of the rural socio-spatial landscape. This feature influences decision making and circumscribes agency. It also explains how physical distance constructs spaces in ways that foster physical privacy, while also creating vulnerabilities for rural women and undermining the sort of privacy that is associated with anonymity. [n342](#) Attention to "place" moves us beyond the broad rural/urban axis. It adds [*390] texture and value by making room for explicit consideration of regional identities, cultures, [n343](#) and economies, with their attendant structures of inequality. This analytical tool helps us see and understand these differences among rural places, including those falling at different points along the rural/urban continuum. Legal actors and policy-makers whose decisions affect rural populations, as well as gender scholars and rural scholars, must explore the repercussions of these socio-spatial features and place-based differences. Intentionality about space and place helps us guard against conflating the idea of a universal women's experience with urban women's experience. It allows us to contemplate not only how a rural woman's experience of gender inequality may differ from that of her urban counterpart, but also how oppression on the basis of race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation may "take a different form ... in the countryside." [n344](#) Indeed, just paying attention to rurality "can be a crucial form of cultural awareness and resistance." [n345](#) The temporal is relevant, too, of course. [n346](#) Changes wrought at specific times and over time have socio-spatial consequences in actual places. In this era of transformation and restructuring for many rural people and places, vigilance is necessary regarding assumptions about rurality. When the "rural" is more contested than ever, [n347](#) we must be open to how demographic, economic, and social changes are reconstructing rural spaces, altering rural power structures, and aggravating or ameliorating spatial and other inequalities. [n348](#) Professor Hari Osofsky asserts that doing legal analysis in spatial context is critical in light of ever-increasing "complexities of scale, interrelatedness of people, entities, and institutions, as well as a multiplicity of connections to and [*391] disconnection from place." [n349](#) Although Osofsky's focus is international law, her assertion is "spaceless": it rings true even in relation to rurality. While that which is rural has long been thought of as quintessentially local, rural livelihoods are no longer isolated economically and culturally from the rest of the country, or from the rest of the world. Though rural places are physically and socially removed from urban America to differing degrees, advances in technology and transportation have blurred aspects of the rural/urban divide. Rural locales are increasingly enmeshed with higher scales and other places, even as spatial isolation and its many consequences constitute (and are constituted by) rurality, influencing events and legal outcomes. Law is called to understand how "power operates through and in spaces and places" [n350](#) - to investigate how space is used to perpetuate disadvantage, inequality, and oppression. [n351](#) Otherwise, space "hides things from us." [n352](#) Nowhere, perhaps, is this more so than in the increasingly obscured spaces and places of rural America. With respect to few groups is this as true as for women who - especially in rural places - populate the already hidden spaces of the private sphere.

Advantage—Ruralism→ Poverty

Anti-Rural Bias Reinforces Poverty and Classism, Renders Economic Oppression Invisible

Debra Lyn Basset, Associate Professor of Law, Michigan State University, "Ruralism," Iowa Law Review, January, 2003 (Lexis)

One of the most poignant facts about many rural areas is the level of poverty - an issue often overlooked due to a preoccupation with urban, rather than rural, poverty. [n129](#) For instance, the Rural Sociological Society [*302] Task Force on Persistent Rural Poverty notes that "rural poverty seldom attracts much notice." [n130](#) The invisibility of rural poverty persists despite the fact that "poverty rates are consistently higher in rural areas, regardless of race." [n131](#) Our society's urban focus contributes directly to the invisibility of rural poverty:

Because we live in an increasingly urban society, public perceptions of the social and economic problems of people burdened by poverty understandably have a clear urban orientation. Unfortunately, our reliance on national statistics, heavily weighted in favor of urban areas, often masks the extent of economic hardship in America's nonmetropolitan and rural areas. [n132](#)

The romanticism associated with rural areas fails to acknowledge the increasing levels of poverty: [n133](#) [*303]

The general public's image of rural America does not even include poverty; conversely, the public image of poverty does not include rural places. And so poverty, as real a feature of many rural landscapes as the hills, fields, and barns, goes quite unnoticed by the predominantly urban national population and inadequately addressed by federal and state governments. [n134](#)

Our society's urban focus magnifies the invisibility that enshrouds the problem of poverty in rural areas, and therefore ruralism exacerbates poverty in rural areas. Indeed, rural areas have a disproportionately large portion of the poor. [n135](#) Not only is the level of poverty striking in rural areas - of the 250 poorest counties in America, 244 are rural [n136](#) - but poverty becomes more acute in more remote rural areas. [n137](#)

Rural dwellers tend to have lower incomes than individuals living in urban areas. [n138](#) Moreover, for many rural dwellers, low wages trap even full- [*304] time workers into poverty. [n139](#) Although low-wage positions constitute a significant portion of rural employment, some rural counties essentially have a low-wage local economy due to the prevalence of these low-wage positions and the lesser availability of higher-paying positions. [n140](#) The 465 rural counties with the highest proportion of workers in low-wage positions have some features in common. These counties have fewer job opportunities in industries that tend to pay higher wages, such as manufacturing. [n141](#) They also tend to have lower wage scales across all types of employment. [n142](#) And, again, they tend to be located in the most isolated rural areas - less populated and more remote from urban centers. [n143](#)

Rural poverty is especially devastating, because many of the services and subsidies available in urban areas do not exist in rural areas, [n144](#) and because the rural poor often are ineligible for those forms of assistance that do exist. [n145](#) Moreover, poverty uniquely impacts rural employment opportunities. Rural poverty is different from urban poverty. [n146](#) In particular, [*305] rates of unemployment and underemployment among rural workers exceed those of urban workers, even at similar levels of education. [n147](#) Rural areas, as contrasted with urban areas, have more jobs requiring low or medium levels of education and training. [n148](#) Despite the fact that "nationwide, the rural poor show a strong commitment to work ... in many rural areas, ... available employment simply does not yield adequate income." [n149](#)

Advantage—Ruralism Reinforces Discrimination

Ruralism Makes the Impacts of Other Forms of Discrimination More Accute

Debra Lyn Basset, Associate Professor of Law, Michigan State University, "Ruralism," Iowa Law Review, January, 2003 (Lexis)

Ruralism has two equally devastating impacts. First, ruralism exacerbates the impact of discrimination against other protected groups. [n240](#) For example, the cumulative discriminatory impact on individuals who are both female and African-American is well documented. [n241](#) Similarly, an individual who is [*329] female, African-American, and from a rural area faces a third potential basis for discrimination. [n242](#) Second, ruralism itself is a separate and independent basis for discrimination.

Perhaps even more dismaying than the actual disadvantages caused by ruralism is the lack of awareness of the prejudice. In this respect, ruralism shares a problem common with other forms of discrimination. Although it is not my intention to directly equate ruralism with racism or sex discrimination, [n243](#) the use of limited analogies is appropriate. [n244](#) For example, it is telling that although a majority of whites believe racial discrimination no longer exists, a majority of African-Americans find discrimination alive and well. [n245](#) In light of recent psychological studies demonstrating that [*330] prejudiced responses are largely unconscious, [n246](#) people who claim, and honestly believe, they are not prejudiced often nevertheless harbor unconscious stereotypes and beliefs. [n247](#)

These same problems are inherent in ruralism. Outside of a few who specialize in rural studies, [n248](#) ruralism as a phenomenon is largely unrecognized. [n249](#) Because urban dwellers are the dominant group, their bias in favor of other urban dwellers - and discrimination against rural dwellers - is unrecognized, unacknowledged, and unexamined. Urban bias has become an objective norm, hiding within the language, perceptions, and expectations of the dominant discourse. When ruralism as a phenomenon is acknowledged to exist, it is discovered in virtually all aspects of living. [n250](#)

[*331] The problems in dealing with discrimination are exacerbated by the current perception that "unless an employer expresses outright hostility to a particular group, people explain disparities between groups by looking for individual, not systemic, reasons... . Most Americans fail to recognize discrimination because it does not "look like what we [think] discrimination [should] look[] like." [n251](#)

This notion of failing to recognize discrimination because it does not "look like" discrimination hits ruralism particularly hard. Employers do not see themselves as discriminating against rural dwellers. Instead, they couch their rejections in terms of a lack of "qualifications" or as not "fitting in." This is consistent with the widely held belief that differences in outcomes are not the result of discrimination or unequal opportunity, but rather are the result of individual differences in talent and effort. [n252](#) [*332] The impact of ruralism is not unlike the impacts suffered by victims of racial, sexual, or other types of discrimination that now receive protected status under federal and state laws. Against a background of poverty, inferior schools, lack of access, and discrimination in laws and policies, the concepts of justice and equal protection ought to apply to ruralism.

Solvency—Federal Infrastructure Key**Federal Investment in Rural Infrastructure is Fundamental to Transforming Rural Quality of Life**

Brian Dabson, Thomas G. Johnson and Charles W. Fluharty, Research Professor at the Truman School of Public Affairs, University of Missouri, Frank Miller Professor of Agricultural and Applied Economics and the Truman School of Public Affairs at the University of Missouri and President and CEO of the Rural Policy Research Institute, "Rethinking Federal Investments in Rural Transportation: Rural Considerations Regarding Reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act," Rural Policy Institute Policy Brief, April 2011

(http://www.rupri.org/Forms/RUPRI_Transportation_April2011.pdf)

Research findings clearly show the critical importance of transportation investment and its ability to create both positive and negative outcomes in terms of economic development and quality of life for rural regions and communities. A positive cycle can be achieved by pursuing transportation investments that produce significant and positive quality of life outcomes for accessibility, safety, health and cost of living. These will improve prospects for economic development, which in turn will generate the resources for more investments in transportation. Conversely, transportation investment that does not give sufficient regard to quality of life outcomes are more likely to diminish the attractiveness of rural areas for economic development and may lead to unintended negative consequences for rural residents, including a reduced ability to pay for transportation improvements and services.

This implies a positive result from policies and regulations which encourage a shift from a reliance on centrally-determined engineering standards to one that allows local and regional citizens, and their jurisdictions, greater capacity and opportunity to identify the outcomes that are most important to them, and then to tailor transportation investments that are most likely to achieve those outcomes.

Solvency—Federal Rural Transit Solves**Federal Integration of Rural Transportation Networks Allows for Viable Programs to Aid the Most Endangered**

Brian Dabson, Thomas G. Johnson and Charles W. Fluharty, Research Professor at the Truman School of Public Affairs, University of Missouri, Frank Miller Professor of Agricultural and Applied Economics and the Truman School of Public Affairs at the University of Missouri and President and CEO of the Rural Policy Research Institute, "Rethinking Federal Investments in Rural Transportation: Rural Considerations Regarding Reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act," Rural Policy Institute Policy Brief, April 2011
(http://www.rupri.org/Forms/RUPRI_Transportation_April2011.pdf)

Rural transportation advocates argue that the current system for planning, building, and maintaining transportation infrastructure in rural areas falls short of meeting the need for access to jobs, shops, services, education, and healthcare within small cities, towns, and their surrounding regions. A position paper from the National Rural Assembly (2010) saw the reauthorization of the Transportation Act as an opportunity to modernize, strengthen and integrate the transportation systems that connect rural people and places to each other and urban commercial centers, while protecting landscapes, habitats and livelihoods of rural communities" (p.1). The paper laid particular stress on the need to incorporate diverse rural voices, including Native American tribes in the conversation. "If transportation planning and construction is to support the needs of rural residents, regional economic development, interstate and national commerce then all voices must be part of the next federal transportation bill" (p.1).

The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) has proposed a series of policy goals that envision the development of a modern, sustainable and seamless surface transportation network that fully integrates and connects the nation's small urban and rural regions with global, metropolitan and neighboring markets. In particular, NADO is asking for enhanced leadership and decision-making roles in statewide and regional transportation planning, program, and project investment prioritization processes to be given to the existing system of metropolitan planning organizations and the emerging network of rural planning organizations. They envision that this devolution of responsibilities would be accompanied by changes in legislation and regulations to provide dedicated funding, higher levels of integration of statewide and regional transportation planning with economic development, housing and land use, and increased investments in public transportation (NADO, 2010).

Solvency—Investigating Poverty is Key

**Public Discourse on the Question of Poverty is the Origin of Our Ability to Solve—
Understanding the Social Origin of Poverty is a Prior Question to the Affirmative**

Mark Robert Rank, Associate professor in the George Warren Brown School of Social Work, One Nation, Underprivileged: Why American Poverty Affects Us All, 2005 (Google Books)

My sense was that, in spite of the serious problems plaguing him and America on that day, Harrington strongly believed in this country and was convinced that solid evidence and arguments could make a positive difference despite the powerful forces working against such an approach. He felt that dialogue and an exchange of ideas was essential to our democracy, and that positive improvement was possible through an understanding of the dynamic changes occurring in our society and through grassroots organizing to confront those changes. Harrington concluded his talk with the following question:

Is it possible for people at the base, for ordinary men and women, to take control of this process of radical change and turn it to the advantage of human freedom? That's why you have to care. Because that is a fundamental question that is posed to this generation.⁷

Such has been true of many of this country's directional changes and revolutions. For example, the civil rights movement represented a dramatic case of raising the level of consciousness in order to facilitate change. Through a series of protests and demonstrations, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was able to vividly reveal the racial hypocrisy of America. As a result, many white Americans began to change their views about the legitimacy and urgency of black Americans' demands for equality and justice. This, in turn, helped to precipitate the important legal and policy changes aimed at reducing racial inequality in America. King's focus was also very much on altering the collective perceptions of poverty. In his final book, *Where Do We Go from Here*, he noted:

A true revolution of value will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of our past and present policies. We are called to play the Good Samaritan on life's roadside; but that will be only an initial act. One day the whole Jericho road must be transformed so that men and women will not be beaten and robbed as they make their journey through life. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it understands that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring. A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth. (1967a: 187-188)

Lasting change must begin with the realization that the status quo of widespread poverty within our borders is unwise, unjust, and intolerable. The purpose of this book is to carefully and convincingly present this point of view. Ultimately, I would like *One Nation, Underprivileged* to touch not only the minds, but also the hearts and souls of my readers. The most persuasive arguments move us on all levels. In order to construct positive social change, we must have the correct description and diagnosis, we must have the concern and passion, and we must have effective remedies to follow through. Only then will we be able to confront the disturbing contrast between the promise of America and the shadow of poverty that underprivileges us all.

AT: No Viable Tech Now**The Answers Exist Now—Rail and Bus Have Demonstrated they are Viable Rural Transit Options**

Dale J. Marsico, Executive Director of the Community Transportation Association, “Transportation Challenges of Rural America,” March 12th, 2009 (http://www.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/Marsico_Testimony_3-12-09.pdf)

Surface transportation between communities by rail or bus has proved to be extremely cost effective and successful in reducing emissions and improving the environment. For lower income individuals without their own personal transportation, such efforts are not just a choice but also a necessity. Our current difficulties lie in developing the surface transportation connections that link rural and smaller communities together. Historically, this function was fulfilled first by state lines that went from location to location with stops in smaller places along the way. This early connectivity was taken over by an expanding rail system that linked all parts of our country, with stops along the way in communities great and small. The end of railroad passenger services created a tremendous void that was taken up, to a lesser degree, by intercity bus carriers who have seen a tremendous reduction in service in recent years and a dramatically altered market. We believe that the combination of events created by the energy situation as well as the environmental concerns we face require a new effort to invigorate the surface connections of communities that are both financially reasonable and environmentally friendly. The technology to create a network linking rural communities is available today and we believe that the off-the-shelf technology of our current bus and rail products can give our country a reasonable way to enhance its connectivity.

AT: Rural Infrastructure Hurts the Environment**Transportation is Crucial for, Not Contrary to Environmental Gains**

Ben Kidder, Masters of Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, "The Challenges of Rural Transportation," Western Rural Development Center, 2006

(http://wrdc.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/pub_9373753.pdf)

Growth comes at a price. However, there are some cases in which environmental concerns go hand in hand with economic development, and transportation solutions that promote both can be found. One study refers to these cases as "no regrets solutions," in which a transportation system has positive or neutral net benefits for the economy, environment, and social health of a community.²⁶

One example is the growing interest in biofuels and other alternatives to gasoline. Such fuels, if they can be made more cost effective, could potentially reduce vehicle emissions greatly in both rural and urban areas. Rural areas may play a major role in the development and production of biofuels since their agricultural origins lie mainly in rural areas.

A second example of aligned economic and environmental interests is the necessity of preserving rural natural beauty. Scenery is very important to the economies of many rural communities, primarily by bringing in tourist dollars. A transportation system that destroys natural beauty (and with it, natural habitat) can have a very negative effect on the local economy.

AT: Economic Explanation of Poverty**Don't Confuse the Fact that Poverty is Related to Economics With Poverty as Solely a Question of Resources—There are More than Economic Factors Involved**

Siddiqur Rahman Osmani, Professor of Development Economics at the School of Policy, Economics and Law, University of Ulster, "Evolving Views on Poverty: Concept, Assessment, and Strategy," Asian Development Bank, July 2003 (http://www.adb.org/Documents/Papers/Evolving_views_poverty/Osmani_paper_final.pdf#page=5)

Two clarifications are needed here to avoid misunderstanding. First, while the concept of poverty does have an irreducible economic connotation, the relevant concept is not low income but the broader concept of inadequate command over economic resources, of which inadequate personal income is only one possible source. Other sources include insufficient command over publicly provided goods and services, inadequate access to communally owned and managed resources, and inadequate command over resources that are made available through formal and informal networks of mutual support. If a person's lack of command over any of these resources plays a role in precipitating basic capability failures, that person would be counted as poor.

Second, the recognition that poverty has an irreducible economic connotation does not necessarily imply primacy of economic factors in the causation of poverty. For example, when discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, or any other ground denies a person access to health care resources, the resulting ill health is clearly a case of capability failure that should count as poverty because lack of access to resources has played a role here. But causal primacy in this case lies in the sociocultural practices and political-legal framework that permit discrimination against particular individuals and groups; lack of command over resources plays merely a mediating role. However, the existence of this mediating role is crucial in distinguishing poverty from a low level of well-being in general.

AT: Politics

Your Disad is Fundamentally Ruralist—The Lack of Political Power Which Makes Your Disad Possible is Based on The Poverty and Structural Discrimination Criticized by the 1AC

Bud Jerke, J.D., University of Pennsylvania Law School, 2010, "Queer Ruralism," Harvard Journal of Law and Gender, 2011 (<http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/jlg/vol341/259-312.pdf>)

On the political level, ruralism is compounded because rural dwellers lack significant political power. In the 1960s, congressional districts with a majority rural population constituted forty-two percent of all districts.⁵⁶ By the late twentieth century, this number had decreased to just thirteen percent.⁵⁷ One scholar notes that "[r]ural people are so widely dispersed that they are politically invisible."⁵⁸

This level of political invisibility has significant implications, particularly for national policymaking. For example, Professor Pruitt argues that the Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act ("PRWORA"), the 1996 welfare reform legislation, "reflects an urban political agenda that failed to consider rural realities."⁵⁹ National dialogue surrounding PRWORA embraced rural myths and stereotypes, such as the belief that the "informal economy" assists the rural poor by allowing them to rely on family and neighbors to supplement income and provide networks for assistance,⁶⁰ and a broad collective notion that challenges of rural life are minor and "offset by its many pleasures."⁶¹ Consequently, PRWORA failed to respond to the unique structural challenges confronting rural dwellers, such as housing, transportation, childcare, employment, and education.⁶² For example, in the area of housing, rural dwellers have a more difficult time than their urban counterparts purchasing a home or paying rent.⁶³ With regard to transportation, rural dwellers face unique challenges due to spatial isolation.⁶⁴ Like much national legislation, PRWORA did not "attend[] to the different economic structures, institutions, social norms, and demographics that mark rural places and entrench rural poverty."⁶⁵

AT: States**Only the Perm Can Solve—Federal and Local Action is Critical to Coordinated Policy**

Dale J. Marsico, Executive Director of the Community Transportation Association, “Transportation Challenges of Rural America,” March 12th, 2009 (http://www.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/Marsico_Testimony_3-12-09.pdf)

Rural transit in our country has taken the traditional concepts of public transportation and service and adapted them to the special role they fill in small towns and rural areas. Smaller vehicles, flexible services, low cost, and a high commitment to customer service are all hallmarks of the rural transportation programs serving our nation today. Federal funds available for rural transit flow through our states and help create a constructive partnership between federal, state, and local officials that is also a unique factor in the successes of our current rural transit programs. Because of the success of the rural transit program, these services play important roles in creating access for millions of our fellow citizens — especially our seniors and those with limited financial resources. Our proposals in our New Surface Mobility Vision call for increasing these important partnerships and services, building on the successes we currently enjoy. Enhancing these services will improve rural mobility, but alone they cannot solve the problems created when our rural communities are disconnected from each other as well as from the rest of our country. Our plan calls for a new series of steps to connect communities by building a new expanded effort we call a new era of connectivity.

AT: States**Empirically, Devolution Has Failed in Rural Transit—Federal Guidance is Crucial to Resource Access and Success Overall**

Ben Kidder, Masters of Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, "The Challenges of Rural Transportation," Western Rural Development Center, 2006

(http://wrdc.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/pub_9373753.pdf)

The emphasis on devolution has produced mixed results. There is some evidence that the new power held by states and local leaders has yet to be wielded effectively. When block grants were made available to states, many had already made commitments to certain projects, and so were unable to quickly realign spending to their priorities.⁵⁴ Additionally, to meet federal matching requirements, many states used gasoline taxes, which in many cases were dedicated by law to highway spending, preventing the use of federal funds for other transportation purposes. Local leaders were also largely unprepared to recognize and communicate their transportation needs effectively through the consultation process. Indeed, some states found it difficult to convince local leaders that taking part in transportation decisions was worth their limited time.⁵⁵ Making sure that local leaders in rural areas have adequate policy and institutional knowledge, organization capacity, and advocacy skills to effectively participate in transportation planning is another key challenge for rural America.

AT: States**Rural Transportation is Inherently Interstate—Only the Federal Government Has the Jurisdiction and Capabiltiy to Solve**

US Department of Transportation, “Study of Rural Transportation Issues,” April 27th, 2010

(<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/RuralTransportationStudy>)

The seamless network that makes up America’s transportation system has four major components: trucks, trains, barges, and ocean vessels. For example, a cargo, such as wheat, might be moved off the field to an elevator by truck, loaded into a train at the elevator, transported to another elevator on the Mississippi River, where it is moved to barges, then taken downriver to New Orleans for transfer to a ship bound for Africa. Each mode of transport is important, but their interaction is vital.

Current United States policy is mode-oriented; different agencies focus on each mode of transportation, and each mode has its own funding mechanisms. Investment and planning could be better focused if it were more system-based. A systems-based approach could identify choke points in the network, and investments could be targeted to improve the interaction between modes.

Transportation will continue to be integral to the successful functioning of the agricultural sector. The Federal Government can play an important role in supporting improvements to the multimodal transportation system that will benefit rural America and global consumers of U.S. food and agricultural products.

AT: Private CP**Relying on Free Market Solutions to Poverty is an Attempt to Relieve Ourselves of Responsibility for the Social Structure of Impoverishment**

Mark Robert Rank, Associate professor in the George Warren Brown School of Social Work, One Nation, Underprivileged: Why American Poverty Affects Us All, 2005 (Google Books)

As we look at the conditions of poverty in this and the next chapter, a fundamental question to be asked is, How close to reality is such a perspective? One of the unspoken advantages and appeals of such a perspective is that it lets us all off the hook. In other words, it serves to relieve us of any responsibility regarding poverty. Although I may feel sorry or distressed about the plight of the poor, I bear no accountability for their situation or their troubles. In fact, my active engagement may only make the situation worse. It is no coincidence that such a perspective lies at the heart of the think tanks, such as the American Enterprise Institute, that have funded Charles Murray's research. Their purpose has largely been to provide quasi-scientific support for their conservative political agenda.² That agenda has been to promote unfettered free-market capitalism and individual responsibility as the sole solutions to poverty, while governmental social programs and safety nets have been derided as abject failures. Throughout the next several chapters, we will see that this perspective largely represents political ideology, rather than empirical reality. In fact, the evidence suggests that free-market capitalism leaves in its wake millions of impoverished households, while governmental actions and supports can effectively reduce the extent of poverty.

AT: Generic CPs**Poverty is an Ideological Concept—Without Adequate Understanding of What Constitutes Poverty Anti-Poverty Strategies are Disabled**

Roni Strier, School of Social Work, Faculty of Welfare Sciences and Health Studies, Haifa University, "Community Anti-Poverty Strategies: A Conceptual Framework for a Critical Discussion," January 23rd, 2008

(<http://bjsw.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/bcm149v1>)

Although communities are a recurring theme in poverty research and an essential component in anti-poverty strategies, the conceptualization of the link between communities and anti-poverty strategies has not been adequately addressed. The article argues that this inadequacy reflects the complexity of the construct. The difficulty in elaborating a more adequate conceptualization of the link between the 'community' concept and the 'anti-poverty strategy' construct derives from the discursive nature of the concepts of 'poverty' and 'community'. The discursive nature of the term 'community' is mirrored in the ways in which the term is subject to multiple definitions, framed according different representations, affected by changing discourse, and interpreted by competing professional traditions of community practice. In addition to this complexity, the discursive character of the 'poverty' concept, which is manifested in the lack of consensus surrounding the goals of anti-poverty strategies and the contentious ideological nature of poverty theories, make the task of reaching a common conceptualization of 'community anti-poverty strategy' extremely difficult. The present article is based on a discourse analysis perspective and presents five analytical categories for a critical discussion of the concept. Moreover, it offers some practical recommendations that can guide social workers in developing strategies that better reflect the plights, desires and aspirations of communities living in poverty.

AT: Generic Kritiks**Our Aff is a Pre-Requisite—Using Any Construction of Poverty Subordinating it to Alternate Concerns or Failing to Critically Interrogate It Causes Our Criticism to Fail**

[Gavin Jones](#), American literature and American studies at Stanford University, "Poverty and the Limits of Literary Criticism," American Literary History, 2003 (Project Muse)

This "in between-ness" of poverty as a category of social being is exactly what makes it such a powerful tool of inquiry in the hands of writers like Melville, Wharton, and Wright. They all explore poverty as a temporal condition of transition yet a social location nonetheless, as a haze of shifting socioeconomic relations that never loses material shape, as the very inverse of "identity" but still a description of structural forces that make minority consciousness matter. To form assumptions about the representation of poverty based on the class background of the writer or to found treatments of social marginalization solely on the writer's cultural background—these approaches leave us poorly equipped to interpret a social category that has always failed to behave within neat boundaries of class or cultural affiliation. But this in between-ness of poverty is also exactly what makes it such a difficult critical category to approach. The ease with which Agee, like Thoreau before him, becomes ambivalent on this issue flags the dangers that haunt any isolation of poverty as a distinct category of human suffering and economic need. If Agee and Thoreau—progressive heroes, of a sort, for the generation in which the "war on poverty" took political shape—seem to stumble, then we can understand why a critical discourse of poverty has also stuttered. Or at least we can appreciate why this discourse has splintered into approaches emphasizing class as the oppressive motor that constructs underclasses and into approaches stressing race or cultural background as an alternative to, more than a product of, disadvantaged socioeconomic situations. The opposing tendencies to view culture transhistorically if not affirmatively, and to undermine apparently hegemonic social categories, have to some degree combined to hinder analysis of literature as a forum in which poverty can be investigated as a social and historical problem that demands definition more than it does deconstruction.

AT: Queer Theory**Focusing on Underlying Queer Epistemology Doesn't Solve the Aff—Queer Ruralism is a Qualitatively Different Category**

Bud Jerke, J.D., University of Pennsylvania Law School, 2010, "Queer Ruralism," Harvard Journal of Law and Gender, 2011 (<http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/jlg/vol341/259-312.pdf>)

Here, rural becomes inextricably linked with conservative and religious: queer rights will never prevail in this rural geography. Rather, one should focus on enlightened urban areas, where queer people actually reside, and where chances for success will be greatest. But while the unanimous decision of the Iowa Supreme Court directly contravenes such rural assumptions, the story is not so simple. In November 2010, Iowans voted against retaining all three justices on the ballot—all three of whom participated in the unanimous decision.⁷ It marks the first time that an Iowa Supreme Court justice has not been retained since the current retention system was adopted in 1962.⁸ The court's decision and subsequent electoral backlash demonstrate the complexity of queer ruralism. On the one hand, the Iowa Supreme Court decision undermines backward stereotypes of rural, while the ouster of the justices reinforces those very stereotypes. The episode recognizes that rural queer existence is not simply the oppressive monolith underlying the stereotypes, but neither is it, even in the wake of a highly favorable judicial opinion, a progressive oasis. Rural queer realities are dynamic.

AT: Formalist/Realist/Etc. Criticisms of Ruralism**No Other Methodology Can Grasp the Function of Ruralism**

Garrett Dash Nelson, PhD Candidate at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, "Towards the New Ruralism," 2009 (<http://people.matinic.us/garrett/ttnr/Full-WebBound.pdf>)

Modern social science, however, has treated rurality more narrowly. One common way of defining rurality has been to chain it to agricultural economics. In 2001 Pitirim Sorokin, Carle Clark Zimmerman, and Charles Josiah Galpin—foundational figures in American rural sociology—identified rural communities as economic units, writing that “the principal criterion of the rural society is occupational—the collection and cultivation of plants and animals,” and consequently “rural sociology is in the first place a sociology of an occupation group, namely the sociology of the agricultural occupation.”²⁴ This way of thinking allied rural scholarship to a program of social reform directed at American farmers; as Donald Field and William Burch point out, “rural sociologists have long made the family farmer a center of interest and emotional commitment.”²⁵ Another way of defining rurality was to focus on structurally identifiable patterns of social behavior. In, Charles Loomis and J. Allan Beegle presented the theoretical analogy of the rural-urban gap as a divide between Ferdinand Tönnies’s conceptual *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* social patterns, cautioning that these were “broad, comprehensive terms which often fail to define explicitly their elements or components” before plowing ahead and claiming that “underlying rural-urban conflicts are the fundamentally different attitudes of people with basically familistic *Gemeinschaft* orientations and those with basically contractual *Gesellschaft* orientations.”²⁶ Yet both the agricultural occupation and the familistic *Gemeinschaft* social type had already begun to drift away from holistic rurality by the time these writers were publishing, forcing a crisis in the purely sociological approach to rural understanding. As life in the countryside began to change morphologically, and eventually merged many of its cultural practices with those of urban life, the observable patterns which once indicated rurality became desynchronized from each other or attenuated entirely. Once farming and its attendant material phenomena were no longer dominant or even recognizable in the broad rural landscape, rural sociologists either had to transfer their work onto different specific forms or accept that rurality as a social concept had been obliterated. In an influential essay in *Rural Sociology*, “it became clear that the rural basis of American society was disappearing.”²⁷ It was not in fact that rurality itself was disappearing but, instead, the epiphenomenal characteristics which had come to represent it.

Solvency—Must Recognize Poverty as an Ideology/Discourse

Political Discussions of Poverty Focus on the Issue of Poverty as a Question of Behavior, Ignoring the Social and Cultural Constructions of Poverty as a Discourse

[Gavin Jones](#), American literature and American studies at Stanford University, "Poverty and the Limits of Literary Criticism," American Literary History, 2003 (Project Muse)

The emergence of poverty as a political issue in the late 1950s and early 1960s was motivated by desires to understand the alleged cultural and psychological aspects of economic inequality. Michael Harrington's *The Other America* stressed poverty as "a way of life," a type of personality, a "fatal, futile universe, an America within America with a twisted spirit" (129). In his contemporaneous studies of Mexican and Puerto Rican communities, Oscar Lewis argued that the chronically poor develop a unique subculture, beyond regional, racial, and national distinctions, a way of life that inspires a system of values and behavioral patterns—some positive but many pathological in kind—passed on from generation to generation (189, 191-92, 197). These ideas gained theoretical definition among political liberals, who attempted to grapple with the elusive nonmaterial results of economic situations and to expose poverty as a crisis in need of urgent political action. But questions of culture have never been far from mainstream understandings of poverty in the US, where emphasis has often fallen on behavior and flawed character as the causes, not the effects, of socioeconomic status. Efforts to view the poor as different because internally deficient, some argue, have traditionally served a need to disguise troubling recognitions that large numbers of people suffer from "grossly unequal class or environmental barriers" in a land of supposed class fluidity (Franklin 140). Contentious cultural explanations of poverty have been compounded by the fact that African Americans and Hispanics are disproportionately poor, which has led to popular perceptions and media suggestions that the poor are almost exclusively nonwhite, their poverty a function of factors subcultural and ethnic [End Page 769] rather than external and socioeconomic. ¹⁴ The recent focus of centrist policy makers on alleged dysfunctions in family structure and lifestyle continues to imply that poverty is not fundamentally a product of economic and political forces, thus making the poor morally culpable for their financial status and implicitly rationalizing schemes to limit welfare. ¹⁵

AT: Social Science Approaches to Poverty

Focusing on the Epistemology of the Known Subject of Poverty, Rather than the Knowing Subject of Social Science Reveals the Autonomy of the Poor

Irene Vasilachis de Gialdino, National Council of Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET) of Argentina, "Identity, Poverty Situations and the Epistemology of the Known Subject," Sociology, 2006 (SAGEPUB)

Thus, the Epistemology of the Known Subject speaks where the Epistemology of the Knowing Subject remains silent for lack of words to account for people's situations, actions, perceptions or meanings. It endeavours to make the known subjects' voices heard, taking care that they are not distorted through translation into the codes of scientific text (Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2003).

According to the Epistemology of the Known Subject, identity is made up of an essential and an existential component. The former is common to all human beings and constitutes what makes them equal. The latter constitutes the differential aspect distinguishing each human being from the others and making each individual unique.

The assumptions of this epistemology, as revealed by the study I have referred to, may be summed up as follows:

Capacity to know. The principle of essential equality of all human beings and the common identity of the knowing and known subjects lead to considering knowledge as a cooperative construction.

Ways of knowing. Other epistemological paradigms are incompatible with this epistemology to the extent that they prevent the full manifestation of the known subjects' identity.

Scope of knowledge. The need for these subjects' integral manifestation leads to the rejection of any conceptualizations, categorizations and typologies stemming from prior partial ideas about their identity.

Knowledge validity. The centrality of social actors' 'privileged' representations is recognized, whereas scientific knowledge is seen as no more than a socially legitimated way of representing reality.

Knowledge development. New ways of knowing are suggested to account both for human beings' essential equality and their existential differences, in order to avoid considering the latter as essential.

Thus, the Epistemology of the Known Subject entails a rupture regarding the ontological features of people's identity. This rupture has significant epistemological consequences, among them the recognition of the cooperative nature of knowledge construction, to which essentially equal subjects make different contributions (Vasilachis de Gialdino, 1999a, 2003).

AT: Race Kritiks**Considering Poverty as a Question of Racial Factors Ignores its Specificity as a Cultural Connection**

[Gavin Jones](#), American literature and American studies at Stanford University, "Poverty and the Limits of Literary Criticism," American Literary History, 2003 (Project Muse)

Poverty is not today a key word among literary scholars because it raises these dilemmas of definition. So politically contentious are the associations of poverty and culture that any type of cultural perspective on the poor becomes inherently suspect. Criticism has been directed recently at the idealistic treatment of culture in a certain type of multiculturalist criticism—culture as an autonomous and collective domain, abstracted from its socioeconomic contexts (Turner 410-11). If the debate concerns the socioeconomic specifically, then the recourse to culture becomes more questionable still, more of an obvious distraction from the social and political roots of domination and exploitation. And if the cultural context becomes problematic in this way, then we are left with a void, at least from the perspective of culturally concerned literary criticism. It is easy to appreciate why academic treatments of social marginalization have privileged issues of race, ethnicity, and gender over socioeconomic factors, when poverty as a social category seems so beyond the possibility of affirmative [End Page 770] social identity from within and so troubling ethically when constructed as a cultural condition from without.

AT: Cap K

The Anti-Ruralist Subordination of the Poor is a Strategy to Enforce Domination and Continue Class Warfare

Garrett Dash Nelson, PhD Candidate at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, "Towards the New Ruralism," 2009 (<http://people.matinic.us/garrett/ttnr/Full-WebBound.pdf>)

Thus, although the guiding interest of Katahdin Iron Works's owners was simple economic profit, in practice the place had taken on a quasi-utopian aspect from the beginning. By its last major overhaul, it was, in W. H. Bunting's assessment, "the most advanced, hopelessly outdated ironworks in the country."¹⁵ The company town featured boarding-houses, the Silver Lake Hotel, a photo saloon, a company store, the homes for its workers, and two farms.¹⁶ When the first wood-burning locomotive, "Black Maria," made its maiden voyage from the works to Brownville, it carried the entire population of the village, and "men, women, and children made the trip with songs and shouts and laughter in high holiday mood"—a far cry from the mechanistic doom which often accompanied anxious writing about industrialization.¹⁷ The town even had its own benign autocrat, Owen W. Davis, who, in addition to his role as a major shareholder in the Katahdin Iron Company, served as "dictator, councilor, judge and jury for the entire township."¹⁸ His "Davis scrip" was accepted as legal tender as far away as Bangor. When the bank finally foreclosed on the works, Davis stalled the sheriff who had been sent to seize the property at the train depot in Brownville and rushed back to the iron works to distribute the company's entire reserve of cash and goods amongst the workers so that the state would have little left to seize from the corporation.¹⁹ In this way, Katahdin Iron Works became an inadvertent emblem of the ruralist-industrial utopianism which charged American economic development throughout the nineteenth century. Even Karl Marx, famously suspicious of "the idiocy of rural life," recognized the extent to which a connection with the land could prevent economic exploitation. "We have seen," he wrote in *Capital*, that the expropriation of the mass of people from the soil forms the basis of the capitalist mode of production. The essence of a free colony, on the contrary, consists in this—that the bulk of the soil is still public property, and every settler on it can turn part of it into his private property and individual means of production, without hindering the later settlers in the same operation.²⁰ The oppressive cancer of the wage-labor system could thus be tempered by enough open land to absorb the primary economic needs of a growing population. Indeed, this point—that "virgin countries, such as America, were ideal for the development of free societies"—is one of the few where Marx and Adam Smith held coincident opinions.²¹ With a heavy dose of sarcasm, Marx wrung his hands over how, in America, where "the cultivation of land is often the secondary pursuit of a blacksmith, a miller, or a shopkeeper," the "constant transformation of the wage-laborers into independent producers" made "the degree of exploitation of the wage-laborer remain indecently low."²² The economic independence which Crèvecoeur once described in factual terms was here put in service of an ideological optimism that America alone could evade the perils of industrial change through the force of its rural life. In this "doctrine of the safety valve," then, American rurality acquired an economic power with international appeal, invoking a cultural myth that "a beneficent nature stronger than any human agency, the ancient resource of Americans that would solve the new problems of industrialism."²³

Politix—Rural Funding Contentious**Funding for Rural Infrastructure Division is Politically Contentious**

Ben Kidder, Masters of Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, "The Challenges of Rural Transportation," Western Rural Development Center, 2006

(http://wrwc.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/pub_9373753.pdf)

Like decision-making authority, funding for rural transportation involves many stakeholders. Funding is provided and divided along many different lines: among federal, state, and local governments, between states, between rural and urban areas, and among various types of transportation.

During the 1980's and 1990's, state and local governments assumed increasing financial responsibility for transportation spending. Their share of total government transportation spending rose from 55.5% in 1980 to 68.7% in 1994.⁵⁷ Despite this trend, federal government spending remains substantial, both in dollar amounts and in the attention its funding decisions receive.

Federal surface transportation spending has been determined by the same transportation bills that govern much policy-making. ISTEA, TEA-21, and SAFETEA-LU. Funds for these bills are raised primarily from gas and fuel taxes and placed in two trust funds: one for highways and one for transit.⁵⁸ Dividing these funds between states and between rural and urban areas is always politically difficult.

Under all three bills, there have been "donor" states, which contribute more in gas taxes than they receive in federal transportation funding, and "recipient" or "donee" states, which receive more than they contribute.⁵⁹ (For a table of western states' donor and recipient status under ISTEA, see Table 2.) Donor states, upset about not getting out as much as they had put in, succeeded in including in TEA-21 a guarantee that all states would receive at least 90.5 cents for every dollar contributed, whereas under ISTEA states could receive as low as 73 cents on the dollar. SAFETEA-LU will gradually raise this guaranteed return to 92 cents.⁶⁰ However, the new bill also ensures that no state will receive less than a specified percentage (rising from 117% in 2005 to 121% in 2009) of its annual funding under TEA-21.⁶¹ The attempt to satisfy both guarantees simultaneously in part explains the large size of the new bill, estimated at \$244 billion.⁶²

Politix—Rural Funding Bipartisan**Support For Rural Transportation is Empirically Bipartisan**

American Chronicle, "RURAL TRANSIT BILL KEEPS SYSTEMS RUNNING," May 23rd, 2009

(<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/103543>)

Washington, DC—Senators Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), Tim Johnson (D-South Dakota) and Jon Tester (D-Montana) are taking steps to improve how money is distributed to rural transit systems across the country. The Senators have introduced the Rural Transit Improvement and Flexibility Act of 2009 to increase rural, elderly, and disabled transit funding in rural states like Idaho, Montana and South Dakota. Crapo, a member of the Senate Banking Committee with jurisdiction over public transit issues, is the lead Republican sponsor of the bill.

"Transit service is an important, sometimes critical link for citizens in small towns to get to the hospital or clinic as well as to work or other destinations," Crapo said. "Increasing federal funds for buses in rural areas and establishing a pilot program for transit centers in smaller cities and towns in areas historically underserved by transit will give a real boost to the utilization of transit. I appreciate the partnership of Senators Johnson and Tester, both representing rural states like Idaho, in introducing this legislation."

Neg—Rural Transportation Leads to Fracking**Rural Roads Key to Sustained Fracking**

Bloomberg Business Week, "Taxpayers Pay as Fracking Trucks Overwhelm Rural Cow Paths," May 14th, 2012
(<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-05-15/taxpayers-pay-as-fracking-trucks-overwhelm-rural-cow-paths>)

A surge in hydraulic fracturing to get gas and oil trapped in rock means drillers need to haul hundreds of truckloads of sand, water and equipment for a single well. Drilling that added jobs and tax revenue for many states also has increased traffic on roads too flimsy to handle the 80,000-pound (36,300 kilogram) trucks that serve well sites. The resulting road damage will cost tens of millions of dollars to fix and is catching officials from Pennsylvania to Texas off guard. Measures to ensure that roads are repaired don't capture the full cost of damage, potentially leaving taxpayers with the bill, according to Lynne Irwin, director of Cornell University's local roads program in Ithaca, New York. "It's the Wild West," Irwin said in an interview. "Everybody is making up their own rules."

Neg—States Solve

Federal Mandates for Rural Transit are Ineffective—Streamlined Local Approaches are Better

Brian Dabson, Thomas G. Johnson and Charles W. Fluharty, Research Professor at the Truman School of Public Affairs, University of Missouri, Frank Miller Professor of Agricultural and Applied Economics and the Truman School of Public Affairs at the University of Missouri and President and CEO of the Rural Policy Research Institute, "Rethinking Federal Investments in Rural Transportation: Rural Considerations Regarding Reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act," Rural Policy Institute Policy Brief, April 2011

(http://www.rupri.org/Forms/RUPRI_Transportation_April2011.pdf)

It is unfortunate that "livability" has become such a divisive term within this policy dialogue. Many rural transportation advocates and policymakers have expressed strong reservations about their perception of the ultimate endgame for this "agenda," fearing additional unfunded federal mandates, and/or a waste of resources more badly needed elsewhere. These are very real concerns. Rural communities must deal continually with new regulations, i.e., new reflectivity mandates, environmental permitting, and other mandates which are very costly for local governments, consume much staff time, and are seldom federally funded. There is also no doubt that rural areas would benefit from more streamlined permitting, and greater regional and local planning control, with incentives for smart design.

Neg—States Solve**Especially For Rural Transit Questions, Local Decisions are Better Decisions**

Brian Dabson, Thomas G. Johnson and Charles W. Fluharty, Research Professor at the Truman School of Public Affairs, University of Missouri, Frank Miller Professor of Agricultural and Applied Economics and the Truman School of Public Affairs at the University of Missouri and President and CEO of the Rural Policy Research Institute, "Rethinking Federal Investments in Rural Transportation: Rural Considerations Regarding Reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act," Rural Policy Institute Policy Brief, April 2011

(http://www.rupri.org/Forms/RUPRI_Transportation_April2011.pdf)

- Decisions about transportation priorities and approaches should be made as locally as possible, although there should be consistency with regional and national priorities.
- Regional intermediaries, such as regional and tribal planning organizations, should be given the standing and resources to act in an effort to achieve this outcome, especially for low-capacity rural and tribal areas, between local communities and state departments of transportation and the U.S. Department of Transportation. Regulations should require consultation and engagement with diverse interests at the local level.
- High growth exurban areas should be encouraged to pursue integrated planning to better balance conflicts between new infrastructure development and environmental/community protection.

Neg—States Solve**Rural Transit Overall is Extremely Diverse—Cannot Be Efficiently Handled in Uniform National Policy**

Ben Kidder, Masters of Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, "The Challenges of Rural Transportation," Western Rural Development Center, 2006

(http://wrdc.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/pub_9373753.pdf)

To add to the confusion over the definition of "rural" is the fact that rural communities are extremely diverse. Although "rural America" is often referred to as if it were one entity, there is a great deal of regional variation. The economic structure of the rural Great Plains is quite different from that of the rural South, which is in turn unlike the rural Northeast, and all of these differences have implications for transportation planning.

Furthermore, rural communities can vary widely within each region. The American West, for example contains the country's most and least populous states. The plains of Wyoming do not face the challenge of terrain that confronts communities in the Sierra Nevada. Some communities in the West are home to extreme poverty, while some are havens for the affluent. In the Pacific Northwest, the Snake-Willamette-Columbia river system is a major waterway transportation network, but for Arizona and New Mexico water transportation is not an option. Long distance truck freight cannot exist in Hawaii and many communities in Alaska are only accessible by plane. The agriculture-dependent central valley of California has different transportation needs than the ski towns of Colorado. There is very little that can be said conclusively about all rural transportation, or even all western rural transportation.

Neg—States Solve**Status Quo is Local control of Rural Infrastructure**

Ben Kidder, Masters of Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, "The Challenges of Rural Transportation," Western Rural Development Center, 2006

(http://wrddc.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/pub_9373753.pdf)

Devolution to state and local authorities can be traced through three most recent federal surface transportation bills, ISTEA, TEA-21, and SAFETEA-LU. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) greatly increased participation of local leaders in transportation decisions. It came after the completion of the interstate highway system and marked a shift of emphasis away from highway construction and toward other emphases, such as safety and environmental soundness.⁴⁹ ISTEA relinquished some federal control over decisions by establishing block grants to states (Dilger, 2003). Most importantly, the Act mandated that state authorities consult with municipal governments in order to access the block grants.⁵⁰ However, it did not require states to consult with officials of communities with less than 50,000 people. TEA-21, the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century, was passed in 1998 as a six-year reauthorization of ISTEA. The new Act improved the consultation process by mandating that rural leaders be consulted along with urban leaders.⁵¹ This process must be separate from consultation with the public in general.⁵² Additionally, if states do not follow local leaders' recommendations, they must provide explanation. Finally, states must seek feedback after implementation of transportation plans. The new transportation bill, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Act – Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), passed in 2005, leaves the rural consultation provisions unchanged.⁵³

Neg—Law is Ruralist**Law is Fundamentally Ruralist—Legal Strategies Ultimately Fail**

Bud Jerke, J.D., University of Pennsylvania Law School, 2010, "Queer Ruralism," Harvard Journal of Law and Gender, 2011 (<http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/jlg/vol341/259-312.pdf>)

Of particular importance to this Article is how ruralism affects law and public policy. Negative stereotypes associated with ruralism work to marginalize rural constituents and litigants, rendering rural dwellers invisible and fostering an urban-centric legal and political regime. The urban assumption is embraced by our political and legal actors, which has the effect of perpetuating and institutionalizing ruralism. As Professor Pruitt observes, the "urban norm . . . is implicit in contemporary legal scholarship and in a great deal of law- and policy-making."⁴³ She argues that the "law's constitutive rhetoric about rural people, places, and livelihoods" reflects many stereotypes about rurality and influences legal outcomes.⁴⁴ When legal and political actors give purchase to rural stereotypes they exacerbate those perceptions; their rhetoric is not merely shaped by rural stereotypes, but has constitutive force in prospectively shaping or affirming them. Rural stereotypes are embedded in several areas of the law. The concern of "local bias" with regard to diversity jurisdiction often involves rural stereotyping, "which assumes provincialism and lack of intelligence" of the rural judiciary.⁴⁵ The area of venue also assumes negative stereotypes of rural juries and their inabilities—inabilities that allegedly prejudice litigants and lead to lower damages awards.⁴⁶

Neg—Race Kritik Links

Attention to Rurality is Fundamentally Analogous to Attention to Whiteness

Hail to You, Racial Interest Blog, "USA Metropolitanization By Race," January 8th, 2012

(<http://hailtoyou.wordpress.com/2012/01/08/usa-metropolitanization-by-race/>)

- Whites are the only major racial group that is not near-totally-urbanized. A respectable share of American-Whites (22.6%) live in communities of less than 50,000 people.
 - Blacks and Hispanics are thoroughly urbanized groups in today's USA. Hispanics, especially, have a negligible presence in Rural-America, with only 7.5% (3.8 million) of them living in communities of less-than-50,000. I'd presume that most of these are concentrated in the Southwest.
 - There are now an equal number of Blacks/Hispanics as Whites in the USA's nine 5-million+ 'megalopolises' — NYC, LA, Chicago, Dallas, Philadelphia, Houston, Washington, Miami, Atlanta. Combined, these megalopolises are home to 33.4 million Blacks/Hispanics and 33.5 million Whites. Among young megalopolis-dwellers, Whites are certainly already a minority.
 - Asians are the most urbanized group in the USA, which follows what we would expect from the densities with which they seem to be comfortable in their own societies. A negligible 500,000 Asians (3.2% of their national population) live outside a 50,000-person metro area. I suspect that a large share of these 500,000 may be either foreign college students in smaller college towns or "GI-bridges". The remainder may live in a smattering of communities in the far west. The actual 'organized Asian' presence in Rural-America, outside the west coast, is likely all-but Zero.
 - American-Indians are the most rural racial group, with nearly half living in communities of less than 250,000. I presume this reflects the reservation system. Some Internet sources claim that 800,000 Indians now live on reservations, which would make sense given this data.
- To live in an urbanized region teeming with millions of people can be psychologically distressing, in certain ways — especially when those millions are of [diverse](#) ethnic-cultural-linguistic-religious origins. (Thus, [Bowling Alone](#)). Trust declines, civic activity declines. The feeling of special connection and pride in the region from which you come, your 'Heimat' feeling (as the Germans say), is unable to properly develop. And how can anyone, or any group, know where it is going if it does not know from whence it comes?

Commentary:

From Yeoman to Metropolitan

The American, historically, had always set himself apart from his cousin in Europe, even from his closest of ethnoreligious kin back on the old continent, in large part because Europe was so long-settled, so densely-populated, often (and consequently) with few opportunities. North-America was different.

After brushing aside the Indian, the early American inherited a vast and empty domain, which he began to settle, and [imbue](#) with a rural-soul. There was so much land, good land, in North-America that the early American could never even imagine it ever becoming as densely-populated as Europe.

In the colonial days of the 1600s and 1700s, and in the 'Westward March' days of the 1800s, American population density was minimal. Those who so-desired could always move on, to the empty frontier, to settle the vast stretches of empty land. A place like Iowa saw its first permanent white settlers only in the 1820s. The solid majority of Americans still lived on farms when Lincoln was elected. (I suspect this knowledge is part of the drive behind Civil War interest, it is folk-nostalgia for the time when Americans were a rural-spirited, true nation [or nations, if you are a partisan of the CSA]).

To understand the USA — at least the historical USA, as well as the [Tea Party](#) and other implicitly-White social-political movements of today — one must understand the rural-nature of American Civilization. The frontier mentality is part of this, but not its entirety. For centuries, the American had been busy-at-work creating this rural civilization. The frontier 'closed' in the late 1800s, but lingered on in a sense through the WWI era or later (My own great-grandfather took Uncle Sam up on the offer of free land in the western USA still on offer in the 1910s, though ended up not staying out west very long). Echoes of frontierism were able to be seen in the Dust Bowl migrations of the 1930s. It's true that urbanization started to weaken the rural character of the USA in the early 20th century, but on through the mid to late 1900s, most non-Ellis-Islander Whites still had at least some kind of memory or folk-memory of living 'on the farm', even if vicariously-so through parents or grandparents.

Neg—Cap Links

The Aff Doesn't Address the Fundamental Cause of Poverty—The Attempt to Remedy the Harms By Employment and Development is a Failed Strategy

John B Cobb, Prof Emeritus of Theology at Claremont, On the Edge of Scarcity, "Globalization and Security", 2002 (p. 7-8)

Preindustrialized societies are labor intensive. There is work for most people, with income sufficient to meet survival needs but little more. Almost everyone is poor, but almost everyone has a place in the economy. Transnational corporations transform these economies with their investments. They may purchase the best land for agricultural production for export, which displaces the subsistence farmers. Some of the farmers are employed in the new agribusiness, but because of less-labor-intensive methods, fewer workers are needed. Similarly, retail chains introduce imported manufactured merchandise that undercuts local handicrafts and small neighborhood stores. Some former artisans and merchants are employed as clerks, but many are not needed. These workers, now separated from the means of independent livelihood, are available as industrial labor.

Displacement from traditional economic life takes place more rapidly than absorption of labor by the new industries. Social changes also generate new needs as well as new desires. Women, especially young women, enter the workforce in large numbers. The population of unemployed and underemployed explodes.

There is a vicious circle here. Because so many seek work, wages are very low. Because one wage cannot support even a small family, more and more family members must seek employment. This move adds to the pool of labor and further depresses wages. Further, if wages begin to rise in one country, then there are other countries that attract industry by keeping their wages low. This process dominates the global scene at present and can be described as the "race to the bottom."

The problems of development in the global context are exacerbated by the extreme mobility of capital. Capital flows create apparent prosperity and even considerable indigenous economic development. But the withdrawal of capital, which sometimes occurs abruptly, undercuts this development, bankrupts indigenous businesses, and often leads to the takeover of productive facilities in a fire sale by transnational investors. Developing nations are left with large debts to be paid by further exploitation of their workers. Defenselessness against these movements of international capital contributes to the precariousness of the condition of the poor.

The description of the underclass used with respect to the United States does not apply well here. In much of the global economy, employment does not lift one out of the underclass. Wages far below subsistence combined with the precariousness of the employment do not turn one into a part of an authentic working class. Too often the only member of a family who can find work is an adolescent daughter. In favorable circumstances, this work is in a factory, where young women constitute preferred employees. Sad to say, millions of young girls work as prostitutes. The global underclass is constituted of the unemployed, the underemployed, and the grossly underpaid who have been separated from their traditional means of subsistence. In most cases, governments are unable or unwilling to provide them with the necessities of life.